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CONFESSION OF CHRIST.

THE Christian Scriptures use very strong language in regard to the duty of confessing Christ before men: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." There must be a meaning corresponding to such emphatic terms as these; and it concerns us to inquire for, and to ponder, that meaning. Now, there are two very distinct ways of looking at all Scripture. We may either explain what is written, historically, — that is, consider the circumstances under which it was originally written and uttered, — or we may interpret it as containing a truth which it concerns all souls equally to know, or an obligation which is binding upon all consciences.

The words cited above were addressed at first by our Lord to his immediate disciples; and they form part of the conversation in which he declared to them, without any reserve, the perils and difficulties that awaited them in their future career. The work which he had begun, they were appointed and authorized to carry on. The truth which he had revealed to them in private communications, they must utter publicly and fearlessly before men. "What they had heard in the ear, that they must preach upon

the house-tops." They must keep back no part of God's word. Whether the world would hear, or would forbear to hear, mattered not, so far as their duty was concerned. They must not flatter themselves that they could fulfil faithfully their mission, without encountering opposition; they must not expect that they could tell men of their errors and sins, without making enemies; they could not effect the revolution which the religion they had in charge contemplated and designed, without becoming martyrs. They saw what awaited themselves in the treatment which he, their Master, received; and they would see it yet more clearly in the sufferings and death which he would shortly pass through. He had come on earth to declare a doctrine which conflicted with opinions everywhere entertained, and with usages and practices everywhere settled and adhered to; and the propagation of this doctrine, now to be committed to their hands, would bring, not peace, but a sword; would cause the advocates of this doctrine to be hated of all men, to be persecuted from city to city, and to be put to death, it might be even by their own kindred. For these consequences, the truth which they would teach was not to be held responsible. It did not seek strife; it was not aggressive in its character; it was not to be uttered and urged upon men in an offensive, uncharitable, irritating manner, but with calmness of spirit, and in gentle, meek, loving words. But the result would be the same, however kind and conciliatory their demeanor and discourse might be. The evils they were to expect would spring out of the passions of mankind, which were wholly opposed to the principles of the new religion.

Such was the prospect plainly presented to the early disciples of Christ; and, in view of these dangers that looked them in the face, the words of the text were addressed to them. And these circumstances, which we know from the sacred record to have belonged to the situation of the early disciples, lend a peculiar emphasis to the language of the Master.

And yet, if we will consider the thing aright, there is no essential difference between their case and our own. The confessors of every period have the same duty to fulfil, and must encounter similar obstacles and dangers in fulfilling it. For, if the subject be justly viewed, the great, the leading duty of a Christian, — of one who believes in the divine authority of Christ, who accepts the Scriptures as containing the revealed will of God, and as setting

forth for our guidance a perfect rule of faith and conduct; — to one, I say, who entertains in his mind these convictions of the Christian religion, in its historical, moral, spiritual aspects, — to such an one the great duty, that indeed which will readily be seen to include all other duties, is to “confess Christ before men;” to let it appear, beyond any question, that the principles which he entertains, which he holds as precious as, ay, even more precious than, *life*, — the principles by which he means, with the help of God, to govern himself so long as he may be allowed to continue in the world, — are derived from the Christian religion; that they have been learned from the recorded discourses, conversations, parables, of the great Teacher of Galilee. From the lips of this Teacher, the Son of man and Son of God, he has been taught that there is a divine government actually exercised over the world; that this government is moral in its character; that it distinguishes righteousness and sin, not merely by the imperfect and uncertain awards of this present state of our being, but as eternally opposite and irreconcilable; as *meriting*, and as destined to *receive*, an opposite judgment hereafter, and to be for ever blessed or condemned. Having received into his soul this great conviction concerning the government of God, the true believer will not shrink from confessing before men the Master who has taught him such a lesson. He will not merely *talk occasionally* as if he had heard and assented to such a doctrine of right and wrong, and of their eternal opposition; but he will live from day to day, openly, consistently, bravely, in the sight of gainsayers, and in defiance of the taunts of the scornful and the threats of the powerful, — live, I say, as if he believed the doctrine, and also as if he wished that others should have the like conviction, and should walk by the same rule.

The mere verbal profession of belief in Christianity, and calling one's self a *Christian*, is not, it is true, so clear a proof now of courage and of deep-seated conviction, the source of true courage, as it was in the early Christian period. Then, when this religion was a new thing in the world; when society was pervaded and moved by a belief and a morality directly opposite to the faith and precepts of Christ; when idolaters were the majority, and the followers of one Jesus, who had died as a malefactor, were in a despised minority; when all the wealth, all the culture, all the influence and power, of the world were on the side of Paganism;

when it was fashionable to worship devils, and to cherish dispositions that were earthly, sensual, devilish, in the heart, — it required a true man to avow his belief in this religion, which was everywhere spoken against. *Then*, even the calling one's self a Christian was the first step to martyrdom. All this is now changed; the majority is on the other side; and to have the reputation of being a Christian, is in our day convenient and profitable. But to confess Christ before men in the right way is no easier now, and is no less beset with difficulties, and is sometimes quite as hazardous to one's reputation, prosperity, and peace of mind, and therefore is not less a test of a true manhood and a high virtue, than it ever was. There is *ridicule* to be met now, as there were "cruel mockings" to be endured by Christ, and by Christ's early followers. Strange as it seems, multitudes at the present day are *ashamed* to be accounted religious; and so, to keep up a bold face among their worldly companions, they run the risk of becoming ashamed of themselves. And, to go no farther than worldly considerations, the question comes up to be settled, which is easier to bear, — the contempt of the poorest portion of our fellow-men, or self-contempt? As another has well and truly remarked, "Young persons should learn, at their first entrance into life, the secret of converting (this) ridicule into respect. The fool, who laughs at you for your pious deportment, will redouble his contempt when he perceives that he is successful. Take care that your piety is *genuine*, — that it is neither fanatical nor superstitious; and, when you have seen that it is good, persevere in it calmly and immovably. Confess Christ before the world, not with the ostentation of a Pharisee, but with the firmness of a man. God, who seeth in secret, will reward you openly; and the very wretch who mocked you will be the first to honor your courage and to respect your zeal.

"But, it may be asked, *why* are we bound to profess religion openly among men? Of what importance are those opinions which the world may form of our religion, if we really believe what religion teaches, and practise what it enjoins? But the fact is, we are not only bound to *be* religious, but to be religious in such a manner that we may make others so. We are bound to make the faith appear honorable among men; to give the timid courage to profess it; to let those, who fluctuate and doubt, perceive that firmness of character which is derived from genuine piety; to

teach those, who would scoff us out of our religion, that we are walking above the world, that their scorn cannot reach us; but that, if it *did*, we should be proud to bear every persecution malignity could inflict; to show our humble gratitude for all the religious blessings we enjoy."

By the phrases, profession of religion, and a confession of Christ before men, is generally understood, in our day, the act of coming forward and publicly joining a Christian church. Such a restricted use of these phrases, which are so full of deep meaning, is, I cannot but think, to be lamented, — chiefly to be lamented on this ground, that the use of them in the religious world is very apt to attach an undue importance and moral value to a mere outward act and form. It comes to be imagined by some, that there is, in the mere fact of becoming a member of any Christian church, an intrinsic virtue; that it is something to be relied upon, as being in itself meritorious; that, without any regard to the life and character of the professing member, it is a valid proof that he is a true Christian, a real child of God, and is sure of salvation. So far as this is a prevailing notion, it is greatly to be deplored. Surely there is nothing in the New-Testament Scriptures to warrant such a notion. Christ never taught his disciples to rely upon forms, or professions, or church organizations, or any thing except faithful obedience to the will of God. You remember the significant and emphatic words of the Master: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

This language is plain; it cannot be misunderstood; it is decisive. The true confession of Christ before men, and the true profession of religion, therefore, is the living of a true, righteous, godly life. Now, I see no authority from Scripture for making this subordinate to church-membership or any thing else. No; in the name of Heaven, no! Nothing must be put above this; Christ's own test shall suffice us: "By their *fruits* shall ye know them." The member of the church, the professor of religion, so called, is not exempt from the application of this simple

and searching and thorough test. He, as much as another, must be tried by it, — must stand or fall, be approved or condemned, by it, — and by nothing else. The rule is simple, equal, universal, eternal.

But, with this qualification premised, I have to say, my friends, that there is a value, an importance, and an obligation, in the act of joining a Christian church. I shall mention three prominent inducements, which, it seems to me, ought to prevail with a person to take such a step.

And first, for a person's own moral well-being, it is every way desirable that an occasion should be provided for expressing publicly before the world that person's own personal, well-matured convictions in regard to the momentous subject of religion, as it bears upon the soul, — life and happiness for time and for eternity. It is unavoidable, that, in the early period of human life, in childhood, and through a portion of youth, religious impressions should be received on trust, from deference to the wisdom and experience and worth of elders. The infant mind is born into the life of thought under conditions which it did not and could not fix for itself. Religion is at first, for every mind, an establishment; and the infant mind is moulded according to the forms in the midst of which it begins its spiritual career. By the action of these forms and established usages upon the tender and impressible soul, its moral and religious nature is started into conscious life, and gradually unfolded. Until the period of intellectual maturity is approached, the mind cannot be expected to have any opinions or principles of its own. It sees with the eyes of others, and accepts their judgments. It has no feeling of being responsible for the opinions in which it reposes. Religion must be true and important, because those who are dear to me, those whom I am bound to love and reverence, believe it and value it. This is the way in which the subject presents itself to the child. And, so long as he remains a child, the human being may speak as a child, and understand and feel as a child, upon the great subject of religion; but, when manhood is reached, he ought to put away childish things. As soon as the mind reaches maturity, the individual is bound, because now he is able, to have opinions of his own, convictions of his own, a faith of his own, a religion that belongs to himself. And the church is a standing institution, offering the appropriate place and occasion where and when

this responsibility may be assumed, and Christ may be confessed, and the vows of discipleship may be taken. The person no longer acts under tutelage; he has attained to spiritual manhood; he takes possession and charge of himself, in the highest sense; he acts no longer in mere deference to others; he thinks and believes for himself. You perceive that this view of the church, and of the act of joining the church, makes it something more than a form. It supposes a real, deep-seated conviction, for the expression and profession of which here is an occasion. And, by *conviction*, I mean to refer, not to the theological items which he may admit into his creed (for these have very little connection with the religious life; the creed may be lengthened out to thirty-nine articles, and the professor be none the better; or it may be reduced to one, and he be none the worse for that); but I mean, by *conviction*, a genuine, sincere persuasion in his heart that this is God's world, and that God's law governs it, and that, with God's help, he means to govern himself by this law, as it is, or may hereafter be, revealed to his conscience from the words of Christ and his apostles. Now, I say, and submit to you, my hearers, that for a person so to assume his position, deliberately, and from a conviction of his own, must constitute an epoch in that person's moral history and consciousness. His true life, his higher life, will date from, and, unless he should fall away from his convictions, it will ever refer back to, that point of time.

But, in the second place, I remark, that the church, through the communion of those holding a like precious faith, furnishes the means of strengthening the religious convictions of the soul. All life is in part sympathetic. It was pronounced of man, almost as soon as he was created, that "it is not good for man that he should be alone." These words express a profound truth in regard to every part of man's being. The physical life of men is sympathetic to a great degree. The healthiest condition of the bodily system could not be attained in solitude. And it is the same in regard to the life of the moral faculties, — the life of the soul's affections. Faith, hope, charity, are the growth of union and fellowship. A life is generated in any body distinct from the separate life of the individual members of the body. The members have each their own life, and more than that shares in the general life. The individual mind may reach strong religious convictions by its own self-directed activity; but to keep those

convictions, when gained, in sound condition, we need communion with other minds.

And, finally, how else was it intended that the borders of the church should be enlarged, and the number of Christian believers be increased, but by the voluntary confession of Christ before men, by one believer after another? The Christian faith was not propagated by *force*, nor has it gained its greatest triumphs by institutions or by machinery, but by voluntary confession. The circumstance is made prominent in the sacred record, that Christ himself was a *witness*: he came to bear witness to the truth. "Before Pontius Pilate," it is recorded, "he witnessed a good confession." The *martyrs* were witnesses. This is the meaning of the name. Little did the princes and potentates of the earth, who relied upon *force* to further any object or to give currency to any opinions, — little did they, and the like of them, estimate the influence of simple *confession*. The experiment had never been tried in the world before Christianity resorted to it and relied upon it. The native instincts of the heart, the soul's natural love of truth and right, had never been appealed to and confided in before. Christ did not reason with men. He was no logician, no special pleader: he appealed to no selfish passion to move them. He is described, in the simple language of Scripture, as "the faithful witness;" and, in sending forth his apostles, his language to them was, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The religion of Christ must be spread in the same way now. Every one, who makes public confession of belief in the truth, increases the *power* of that truth, and does somewhat to hasten the advent of the period when that truth shall be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

W. P. L.

GROWING OLD.

WHY do we all dread growing old? We seem impatient to acquire every thing else, but wonderfully resigned to wait for what time alone can furnish, — experience and wisdom. We measure, week after week, the vines that are climbing our piazza-pillars,

and watch with joy, each spring, to see how the young elms stretch their boughs wider across our lawn; we acknowledge that houses we pass every day, and which we remember as once stiff and new, are beautified by the moss and weather-stains with which age has overspread them: but, for ourselves and our children, we are always ready to exclaim, half-shudderingly, —

“Touch us gently, Time!”

The unconscious innocence and beauty of childhood, its freedom from care and accountableness, its sudden transitions from cloud to sun, and its readiness to be amused, are all very poetical, as the beginning of better things; just as the blossom is more beautiful than the peach; as pearly morning clouds, with their touches of rose-color and violet, are more poetical than the round, dazzling sun they herald; as sunset excites more wonder than the stars. Once earth seemed to us a great, beautiful baby-house, with a bright-blue ceiling and velvety-green carpets; and the men, women, horses, houses, factories, in its streets and lanes, were curious pieces of machinery, set going for our amusement. The worst tempest meant no more than a bolt against our egress from the nursery; and sunshine was only a messenger come to give us release; and night was a curtain let down about our bed, and “pinned” with stars.

Lift the curtain *now* from the same nursery-window, and let us find how much we have lost by growing old. Night lets the same star-studded drapery down; but how different the stars and the darkness are from those of other days! The pretty spangles have grown rich with meaning, and alive with associations: we have studied them with Humboldt, Kepler, and Newton; with Shakspeare, Milton, and Moses; with friends, the good and beautiful, who walked with us beneath them only for a while, then —

“Fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life.”

They have watched us, these stars, like guardian angels, through all phases of our existence; are still watching every path we have ever trod; are still shedding their light upon every grave over which we have ever wept, — forgotten as well as remembered ones. We have looked up to them for encouragement in hours of trial and doubt: they have listened to the sweetest words of love, and the keenest words of scorn, that ever sank into our souls.

And thought wanders on, above this "dome of sky," to all we have lost, and all we hope for, on that mysterious "other side" of the veil, until the river of life, and the palms which sprinkle their golden shadows over the garden of paradise, seem real and tangible as poet and prophet have described.

Then we come down to earth again. The landscape, which holds a great city and scores of towns in its wide semicircle, is glittering with myriads of lesser stars, lighted by home-fires, by trade, industry, and travel. How well we remember what it used to seem! — a great factory lighted up; or, in more poetical moods, a plaster-of-paris house, with colored paper-windows, and a light set inside.

Now it means, — one dreads attempting to tell how much! — means all of life, epitomized in those factories, railroads, homes, and hearts. It means joy and sorrow, life and death, luxury and starvation; means art, music, and poetry; means time and eternity, heaven and hell. It means the one great voice that moved over chaos, calling it into order, and commanding, "Let there be light!" — the same voice, only broken into millions of separate tones, which no one can combine or conjure into music.

Time rarely brings an experience so new but it is born into a family of ancient associations. Like the spring, life itself blossoms full of legends: its snow-drops and sweet-briers mean more than freshness, fragrance, and beauty; as those of spring are more precious for the hands that have plucked blossoms from the same root, and feet that have wandered in search of them with us.

The maiden goes to Trenton and Niagara, loses no vision of wonder or delight, is wild with rapture, stunned with awe, and trembling in reverence every hour of the day; but, after her return, she will whisper, to somebody whom she left at home, that nothing moved her so much as the little cluster of forget-me-not that nestled and blossomed among the great rocks over which the fall made its tremendous plunge; and how she had crept to the slippery edge of the abyss, and gathered the flower, wet as it was with spray, and trembling with the roar, and had brought it home in exchange for the spray of forget-me-not somebody gave her, the first time they ever met.

One day last winter it was snowing: fast and far the white flakes smothered the air, and heaped their pearly flowers over all the uncleanness and deformity of earth. A bright child said, as

she watched, "What makes it? What's the matter? Are the angels moulting, like our canary-bird?" and turned again to wonder, pressing —

"Just the tips
Of rosy fingers 'gainst the pane."

Time has touched our little one gently; for, when hardly a twelve-month had passed, and pearly snow-flowers were falling to earth again, and we stood by the same window, in thought her form came back to us unchanged: but, alas! we thought, too, of —

"A mound in sweet Auburn,
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood;" —

for the snow-wreaths were melting into another grave.

And thus with every year through which time, we say, so cruelly hurries us, how much life gains in real worth and significance! and how much easier, brighter, better, existence becomes! If it be not so, why does no philanthropist establish colleges for the preservation, or the restoring and accumulating, of those amiable and bewitching traits which distinguish childhood; set legislators riding upon hobby-horses again; give theologians rattles, and poets arrowroot, and novelists percussion-caps and sleigh-bells?

In those romantic days, so lost now in the past, and in the clouds of poetic feeling with which we have unfolded them, how easily we were surprised and entertained and delighted! A sunflower was radiant then as the sun, and blossomed almost as far above our heads. The song of a bird, and the report of a pistol, excited wonder, each in the same degree and quality, so charmingly impartial our judgments were! The size of our playhouse, the sweetness of our cake, and the glory of sunshine that illumined the great world for us, gave equal pleasure. Then we made friends with cats and dogs, with trees and clouds; and all earthly things bent over us so protectingly! If we ran through fields of grain, the ripe ears would meet and whisper above our heads, while we, ruthless hunters, were in full chase after a cricket or grasshopper; and, when we played in a clover-field or mowing-lot, how every blade of scented grass, and every round pink-blossom, seemed like an equal and dear friend, till we were ready

to clasp them by armfuls to our little eager hearts ! How horrible wasps and bees were, and what enviable heroes squirrels ! and what a mystery about all those musical birds, whose bodies were winged as our hearts ! Then, for embodiments of wisdom, courage, strength, virtue, beauty, we had mothers and grandfathers, aunts and cousins, by scores. It was unquestionably beautiful, as a beginning.

But, since we have grown older, how wondrously things have wheeled about ! What once it was pleasant to want, it is pleasant now to possess ; the enjoyment we found once in believing sun and sunflower equally bright, we find now in distinguishing between them ; the delicious wonder which the bird-song and pistol-report excited, is replaced by the satisfaction of comprehending their cause, meaning, and respective places, in the scale of musical sounds. If we cannot still make friends with cats and dogs, their places are supplied by men and women ; if earthly things no longer bend over us protectingly, the great laws from which these earthly forms all sprang, and the loving Providence which fitted them to our needs, bend over us still. In place of wheat-ears, the stars meet and whisper above our heads ; and for crickets and grasshoppers, we still hunt down what gain or pleasure soever may have chanced to please our eye. What is companionable, fragrant, and lovely, we can still clasp to eager hearts ; and, if wasps and bees have grown less horrible, critics of fashion, of behavior, belief, and expression, have grown far greater objects of dread. We still find squirrels to envy, in all who go their own free ways, and leave us behind among the restraints wherewith we have allowed ourselves to become entangled ; and there is the self-same mystery about all bird-like *souls*, that, with nests builded near our own on earth, while we only creep and stammer, can soar and sing. As for the embodiments of wisdom, beauty, and truth, this dreaded gift, experience, has daguerreotyped — or, rather, has drawn out where Nature printed them upon our souls in sympathetic ink — fairer pictures than those we found in grandfather, aunt, and cousin. Henceforth the idols are useless ; and need we care that, as such, they are “ broken to our faces ” ?

K. C.

THE FITNESS AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — In pursuing this subject of the authority of Jesus Christ, as the Founder of our religion, the “only-begotten Son of the Father,” you ask me what I think of the propriety and efficacy of prayer; for prayer was most certainly and most peremptorily urged upon his disciples by him, as you yourself acknowledge. You ask if it be not trying to have our own wills in opposition to God’s will, to ask for worldly, or even spiritual, blessings; and if it were not better, and more Christian-like, as you term it, to rely so entirely upon the love of the Father, as to have no wish to pray, to ask, for any thing. You say you do not think it right to ask God to do other than he thinks best for us; that, from the necessity of the case, we must submit to his will; and that you feel sure his way is the best for us, and so have no desire to change it.

In the first place, I answer, as to the propriety of prayer, that it is a necessity of our nature; that the spirit can no more exist an hour without prayer, than the body can exist without food and air; and that no necessity of our being is it improper to follow, as it implies that God has imposed a necessity upon us which it is improper to fulfil. Now, in the nature of things, this cannot be; and it were as well to say that we ought not to eat for the body’s sustenance, as not to pray for the sustenance of the spirit.

And it is impossible not to pray. You rise in the morning, and the weather is stormy, and it interferes with all your plans for the day. Instantly the desire arises, “I hope it will not rain to-day.” Or you rise with the feeling of incipient disease in your system, and you “hope you are not going to be sick.” These *hopes* are as natural as your breath. And what are hopes and desires but prayers? “Prayer,” says Montgomery, “is the soul’s sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed;” and these “sincere desires of the soul” are prayers, whether they are recognized as such or not. And if not recognized as such, not allowed the name of prayers, then, according to your theory, they are useless, and, according to mine, actually wicked.

There can be no impropriety in a child’s asking of its parent its heart’s desires. The parent knows what the child wishes and

needs, it may be, and is more than willing to grant his requests : but it takes nothing from his faith in his parent to ask him to grant his desires ; neither does it take from the real value of the parental character to wait sometimes to be asked before granting. A kind parent loves to be entreated ; and thus do I conceive it to be with our heavenly Father. I believe most fully in God's ever-watchful providence ; that he cares for us always, even in the smallest as well as the greatest things : but I do believe that some things we must ask for before he grants them ; that sometimes it is in the prayer itself that the answer to it lies.

I feel sure that this necessity of our nature to ask, to pray, is given us for the best purpose, — that of placing us in the most entire dependence upon our heavenly Father, knowingly and willingly. I cannot help desiring the life of those I love, the continuance of health and prosperity, the fulfilment of my plans ; and is it not much better to acknowledge this necessity of my nature, and, without any subterfuge, call it by its true name, a necessity of prayer, and thereby convince myself of its reality, and of my entire dependence upon God ? He who never forms his prayers into distinct thoughts and words will hardly “pray without ceasing” in the sense the apostle means. The impropriety I conceive to exist in not recognizing this law of our being ; with indifference standing aloof, as it were, like proud, self-dependent spirits, — for I cannot call it waiting, — to receive what the Ruler of the universe, according to his unchanging laws, sees fit to send.

What impropriety can there be in my going to my heavenly Father, and asking him for the simplest necessity of my daily life ? I know “he knoweth I have need of these things before I ask him ;” but my soul desires them, and, in reality, prays for them. How much more proper, and consistent with itself, is it for my soul knowingly and deliberately to ask for them, — always, of course, with the feeling of entire submission to his holy will ! I can feel it to be no impropriety in the wisest and purest, any more than in the most ignorant and vile, thus openly to acknowledge their entire dependence upon God.

And as to the efficacy of prayer, none but a praying spirit can understand what it means. I conceive prayer to be the only truly efficacious remedy for all our trials “of mind, body, or estate.” You say you do not think that any prayers avail to do away the evils of society, — the sin and oppression that reign around. I

heard a man say once, that "he had done praying for the emancipation of the slave, and was now working for it." But, I thought, how much better could you work for so desirable an end, if, over every effort that you make, you prayed for God's blessing, and that it might be in accordance with his will! Now, I am willing to acknowledge that prayers alone will never, of themselves, remove any existing evil: but I hold, that he who does not work has not prayed; for, for what I really desire, I must, of necessity, pray. How much can I pray for the welfare of the slave, if I am unwilling to work at all for him? True prayer and works go hand in hand. These people complain because their work is not sooner accomplished: why may it not be because they do not pray before they work, thus asking God to co-operate with them? Let no one complain of the inefficacy of prayer until he has, in reality, prayed. Pray, and you shall know its efficacy; "ask, and ye shall receive."

But, you inquire, how are you to know when your prayers have been efficacious? I answer again, Pray, and you will know. The answer to prayer is not always immediate; from the necessity of the case, it cannot always be so: but the soul's satisfaction and peace, after prayer, is its best answer, and often the only perceivable one that we receive. But there are prayers which have an immediate answer. You find yourself in the midst of perplexities and irritating circumstances, and you pray for light to guide you through them, and a patient spirit to endure. I believe, if you have prayed in the right spirit, and, without any reserve, thrown yourself upon your heavenly Father, that the answer to such prayer is immediate; that you will find it, if you seek for it, in the peace of your soul. The trials may not have vanished, — probably will not, until you have struggled through them; but their power to irritate has gone, and half of their bitterness has passed away: for now you feel that you are not left to struggle alone; that the hand of the Father is outstretched to help you, and in peace you can recline upon the Almighty's arm. Sorrows come, under which your spirit sinks; friends are taken from your sight; and, alone and in agony, "your heart and your soul cry out for the living God." You try hard to bear with becoming fortitude, as you term it, the trials of life; in your own strength, try to breast the current of the waves that roll over you: but your soul fails, and sinks at last. But now,

if you turn unto God, and cast all your sorrows upon him, pray to him for his care, his love, his grace, all will be changed, as it were, in an instant. The efficacy of such prayer you will feel, even as you pray, in the peace that steals over you, the rest that comes to you; and you are sure now that God never intended that you should buffet with the waves alone. I think the certain answer you would feel to one such prayer would be enough to satisfy all your doubts of its efficacy.

But there are times when there seems to come no answer to our prayer. I know it is so; and to deny it would do no good. But perhaps it is ourselves who are not in the right spirit to receive, rather than that our prayers are not answered. It must be so. We cannot understand why it is; we cannot see wherein our prayers are wrong: but, of a certainty, something in us is wrong, or else the peace of the soul would be ours. Perhaps it is because we do not pray in faith, believing. We pray for those we love, for their happiness and true blessing; and it seems as though no answer came. The mother prays earnestly and long for her prodigal son, that he may see the error of his ways, and return, but it seems wholly without effect; but as surely do I believe that oftentimes it is those very prayers which are effectual for the prodigal's reform, though he may never hear them. In his "far country" to which he has strayed, the spirit comes to him, and wakens tender memories of his distant home, he knows not why nor how, — his father's unceasing care, his mother's watchful love, — and his heart is melted within him when he thinks of his own ingratitude to such unmerited affection. And he thinks now of his sins as he never has thought of them before, and they appear in their true light; and, abased and truly repentant, he kneels before his heavenly Father, and prays.

Of prayers for spiritual blessings, it is often the case that they seem to be unanswered. We feel that it is right to pray for all spiritual gifts; and we are discouraged, disheartened, and faithless, because they seem to be denied. But most likely it is a demand for them that we have made, and not a prayer, — asking for them as though they were ours of right, and not free gifts of His grace. Like the prodigal son, we ask that the portion of goods that falleth to us shall be given to us. Surely it is presumptuous to expect any efficacy in such prayers. The love of God, no more than the love of man, ever comes to us by demanding it. Only love

begets love. The love of God to us should beget love in us to him; and, if we love our heavenly Father, we shall never pray in vain.

And in the common events of life, in the evils under which the world groans, these very evils for which you think prayer has no efficacy, I think it is because we do not pray as children to a father, but demand as our *right*, to *pay* us for our efforts, that they shall succeed. I feel sure that it is because these philanthropists have been so secure in their own strength, so proud in spirit, and self-praising, as though it were by their right arm the weapons were to be wielded which were to uproot all evil, that their efforts have been attended with so little success. How can they expect the blessing of God to be upon their work, if they never ask for it? for it is only to him that asketh that it shall be given. Prayer removes mountains of difficulties, tears down all obstacles, uproots all impediments in our way. There is an anecdote told of St. Theresa, that one time her efforts had been unsuccessful, her means were expended; and, disheartened and discouraged, she sat down by the wayside, and thought and prayed. "Theresa alone," she said, "is helpless, can do nothing; but Theresa and God can do every thing." And, with this assurance in answer to her prayer, she went on her way rejoicing. If we could only feel as she did, that of ourselves we could do nothing, then we should pray "prayers that are prayers," and of their efficacy we should never doubt even for a moment.

I once read an anecdote of a little boy, that most beautifully illustrates this perfect confidence in prayer. He was poor, and he had no bread to eat. With all the trusting faith of his little heart, he knelt down by himself, and prayed for his "daily bread;" and, a little time after, some good Samaritan came with the bread for which he had so earnestly prayed. "I was sure," said he, "that God would give me bread, if I prayed to him for it." You may say it was a perfectly natural occurrence: probably the relief would have come, even if he had not prayed. But why not believe it was the direct answer to his prayer? Ah! my dear friend, if we only had this faith in prayer, how many events, which now appear mere matters of course, would be felt to come direct from God! I do not see why it is not best to believe so, and not that they come in their course to us, as the planets in their orbits.

And of the efficacy of prayer for the spirit's growth there surely can be no doubt. Prayer is the soul's aliment, and should be its daily food. It is a necessity of our being, that we assimilate to those we most love and have the most intercourse with. Now, we are the children of our heavenly Father, and we ought to grow more and more like what his beloved children should become. Prayer is the power which he has given us to hold this blessed intercourse with him. The oftener we pray, the more we shall become like him, — fit to be heirs and joint-heirs, with Christ, of the kingdom of heaven. It is those only who thus have their "conversation in heaven" that ever receive that blessed spirit which makes them one with the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; when they can pray that prayer which contains all prayer, — "Thy will, not mine, be done."

But of the propriety and efficacy of prayer I have a more convincing evidence in the example of Jesus Christ. He says, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." He told his disciples that they must pray to their Father in secret. He tells them that his miraculous power comes from fasting and prayer. In all times of trial he prayed. Before he began his ministry, he passed a long time alone in the wilderness, in meditation and prayer; he passed whole nights upon the mountain-tops in prayer; and, before he raised the dead, he prayed. And, in that hour of bitterest agony, he went apart by himself to pray; even three times did he pray before the "angels came and ministered unto him." His example is sufficient authority for me on this subject, as on all others. It is our bounden duty, which we may not omit, our blessed privilege, of which it is worse than folly to deprive ourselves, to pray to our Father who is in heaven. When we look up to God as the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when we pray to him in the spirit of the disciples of his beloved Son, then, and then only, shall we know in what consists the efficacy of prayer.

This necessity of our nature to pray was recognized by our Saviour in the same way as our belief in God and the immortality of the soul. He never tries to convince his hearers that there is such a thing as prayer; but, assuming it as an established principle, he exhorts men to pray constantly, and not to faint or be faithless; to pray to God, as the object of all prayer; to pray in secret, and in the spirit; to pray daily, and for our simplest

necessities; to pray humbly, and in faith, — believing, asking for his will, and not ours, to be done, and to give him all the glory.

It is because we do not pray in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, having our wills in entire submission unto our heavenly Father, that so many times our prayers seem unavailing, and we feel as though "God were afar off, that he could not hear." Like Jacob of old, sometimes we must struggle and wrestle with the spirit "until the break of day." "Until the break of day," — that beautiful simile of light from above; for if we do wrestle without failing, in faith, believing, the break of day will surely come, and God, our Father, in his divine love and grace, will send his angels, and they will minister unto us.

My dear friend, I have nothing more to say to you but to reiterate, Pray, and you shall know the efficacy of prayer: for he that asketh, receiveth; and he "who doeth the Father's will shall know of the doctrine."

Yours in love,

N.

SECOND LETTER OF DR. E. B. HALL ON THE ATONEMENT.

To the Editor of the "Monthly Religious Magazine."

MY BROTHER, — Mr. Dutton's Letter in your last number, replying to my Letter of the previous number, I have read carefully, I hope candidly. I had no thought of calling out, by my single question, so large a discussion of the subject of the Atonement, still less of giving it the aspect of a personal controversy, for which I have no fondness. Still, I have no right to complain. Mr. Dutton has replied with courtesy and frankness, for which I thank him. I thank him, too, for softening some of the harsher features of the doctrine, indignantly rejecting one of its early and worst forms, and contenting himself with the old arguments in the defence. But he falls into some misstatements or misapprehensions of our view, and retains and magnifies the essential element of Calvinistic atonement. His arguments have all been answered many times; and any who desire can easily find the answers, both in old and new writings. I have no inclination to repeat what others have said, and should

be willing myself to leave the matter where it is, having answered the purpose of my letter.

That purpose was to call for evidence which I had never found in the Bible, and which I am now still more convinced does not exist there. Indeed, I am not sure that Mr. Dutton saw exactly the point I intended to make; though, if he did not, it may have been my fault. He is surprised at my saying, of that to which I objected, that "none had so much as attempted to prove it from the Scriptures." But that remark, beside being qualified by the last clause, relates not to the whole doctrine, as usually stated, but to that feature which I specially marked, including the inference which I thought to be necessary, and which is now admitted. The attempt has not been made, even here, to prove "from the Scriptures" that God cannot pardon the repentant sinner and obedient subject, of his own free grace, independently of all else; still less, that, "had not Christ died, the penitent, the loyal, and the holy, as well as the impenitent and disobedient, must sink into eternal perdition." This was my inference; and Mr. Dutton, striking out a clause which I have here omitted, endorses the inference, and says it is what he believes and teaches. Now, I insist that there is not a word quoted by him from the Bible, nor a word in the Bible itself, that touches that point: it is simply asserted. God has never said, Christ never taught, that in any possible circumstances, under the government of perfect justice, the penitent, the loyal, and the holy, would or could *perish*. The very term "holy," if no other, — a term that stands for the highest religious character, holiness being itself sanctification, and a preparation for heaven, — forbids the thought, and makes the assertion monstrous. I would not insist upon a word, or the casual use of it, had I not called attention to it for the very reason that I thought it might have been accidental; though the words connected with it, rightly interpreted, are nearly as strong. But they are all retained. And I aver, the declaration, that the penitent, the loyal, and the holy, could not be saved from perdition, unless a holier and exalted being stepped in between them and the divine law, to meet the demands of that law by the sacrifice of himself, — himself, too, a portion of the Lawgiver, — has no foundation or justification in the Scriptures. It is a figment of the mind, a creature of that carnal reason which has been so often denounced.

Nor is it merely a word that is thus used. There is a principle here, which lies at the foundation of the whole Calvinistic and Trinitarian scheme, and which is usually taken for granted, without pertinent scriptural proof, or, as it seems to us, any rational, logical warrant. It is the principle, that infinite justice exacts an infinite penalty for every infraction of the law of God, and makes it unsafe and unjust in God to remit the penalty without an "equivalent," or to forgive the offender, even if he sees that the purpose of the law is already answered in the soul of that offender. Nay, it seems to be assumed, that the purpose of the divine law is to vindicate law itself, not to produce allegiance or righteousness; and therefore, if absolute pardon were offered, the Lawgiver would be dishonored, and the universe endangered, even if the universe had returned to genuine repentance, allegiance, and holiness. Where is it taught, we ask, that punishment threatened to the sinful makes it impossible or inconsistent in God to forgive him who has turned from sin to holiness? Especially might we ask, — does revelation or right reason establish the principle, that the ends of perfect justice will be better answered by a substitute or equivalent for the threatened penalty, than by the remission of that penalty in behalf of the most thoroughly repentant, — better satisfied by the punishment or suffering of the innocent, than by the forgiveness of him who comes with the humble and devout petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner?"

These ideas, which I had specially in mind in writing before, would not stand before those "principles of honor and right" for which Dr. Beecher contends in the "Conflict of Ages," and which he abundantly proves, if he proves nothing else, have been defended by the most eminent Orthodox writers in connection with every thing human, while they refuse to apply them to the being and government of *God*. It is well known that some theologians have asserted, that it would not be unjust or wrong in the Supreme Ruler to inflict any amount of penal suffering upon even an innocent being, for the ends of justice and the vindication of law. Gale says that God may do this justly, and that he did inflict "all the torments of hell on the human nature of his own Son." Calvin and Luther, with many more, have used language very like this. From such language, Mr. Dutton, and nearly all who now live, thank God, would recoil with horror. They are not

accountable for it; they are not to be judged by it, but by their own statements. We only ask how such language differs, or how the principle differs, from the allegation, that multitudes who never heard of Christ, but have lived up to their light and law, with other multitudes in Christian lands, who have repented of sin, and become loyal and holy, must yet be doomed to eternal torments, had not an innocent, divine being borne in some way the penalty of their infinite transgressions; or, at the least, had he not done that, which renders it just in God to forgive the same persons whom it would have been not just to forgive without it, nor safe for law and moral government.

Leaving that now, let us come to the Scriptures and Mr. Dutton's arguments. But let it be noted that I have made only one point. From much that has been written upon my Letter, it might be supposed that I had denied any and all atonement; and yet I have done nothing of the kind. "He strenuously insists," says Mr. Dutton in his Reply, "that repentance alone is a sufficient ground of forgiveness, and that Christ's life and death are necessary only to make sinners penitent and holy." I know not where I have said that. The "ground of forgiveness," I suppose to be laid in the law and mercy of God, as I hope to show; and the necessity or influence of "Christ's life and death," I never attempt to limit.

The whole subject is one of dread solemnity. I profess no boldness here. When he who inquires into the nature and pardon of sin is himself the sinner, and with dim, perhaps distorted vision, attempts to look into the deep things of the spirit of God, his original and eternal decrees, his pleasure or displeasure with frail man, and the extent of that mercy which spared not the beloved Son, but delivered him up for us all, — boldness is an offence, bigotry and dogmatism sins. To inquire is a duty, and sometimes to controvert; but costly and sad would be any result, with the loss of humility and charity.

Mr. Dutton's statement, I believe, may be reduced to three propositions; and if there be any error, in form or word, he will not think it intentional. I thus divide it, to exhibit the important points, and bring the discussion within reasonable limits.

1. God's law annexes the penalty of death to every violation; and that death, "everlasting punishment."

2. Consistently with this law, God cannot justly or safely

forgive the sinner, however repentant and loyal, unless a special atonement be made for violated law, and an equivalent offered for the remitted penalty.

3. "Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, by his life and his death, and especially by his death, has constituted a just ground of divine pardon for penitent and believing sinners," through which alone they can be forgiven, even those who never heard of Christ, or could exercise any faith in that sacrifice which has saved them and all men from eternal perdition.

The proof of the first proposition, touching the law and the penalty, is found by Mr. Dutton in the death threatened to Adam, in Eden, if he ate of the forbidden tree: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," — or, "dying, thou shalt die;" i. e., "death in the intensest and fullest sense." To this it is added, "The meaning of this penalty is frequently given by Christ in decisive language. He calls it 'everlasting punishment.'" Here begin the assumptions. (I use the word in no disrespect, but as the only word for the idea.) It is first assumed, that this prohibition, with the annexed penalty, was the designed promulgation of the great law of retribution, for the whole family of man, in Adam, for all time. Is there any evidence of this in the context, or in any subsequent allusion to it? I think not: it is simply an opinion, and one of many different opinions, in regard to this opening account of Genesis. To speak of it as a demonstrative certainty, and proceed to make it the basis of a vast system, the corner-stone of both dispensations, is assuming too much. Again: it is assumed that the death there was to be wholly "spiritual." We know it did not prove natural death: but very various have been the views of scholars and believers as to its exact import and extent; nor has this difference been restricted to any sect.* Again: it is said that Christ often explains this penalty, and calls it "everlasting punishment." Did Christ ever connect the two events or declarations, so as to make this sure, or is the connection only in the mind of the reader? As an opinion, it is something; as a demonstration, nothing.

But admit it all; allow Mr. Dutton's opinion of those three points to be correct. There was another declaration, following closely upon the first, addressed by Jehovah himself to a son of

* Diverse Orthodox opinions of this law may be seen, in an article on the "Atonement and the Penalty," in the Bib. Rep., Jan. 1850.

Adam, who had added sin to sin, and was already at heart guilty of a brother's blood. The Lord said unto Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Whatever interpretation is given to this, it contains a promise as well as a threatening; — a promise of acceptance, on the simple condition of "doing well."

Having found the law, for all men and all time, in that "threatened death," no other passage or proof being adduced, Mr. Dutton goes on to reason — not to prove from Scripture, but to reason — on the necessity and object of the penalty. And here is assumed that principle to which I have adverted, and which lies at the foundation of the whole structure. It is the idea, and the confident assertion, that a righteous Lawgiver cannot withhold or remit any part of a threatened penalty; in other words, can never show mercy *freely*, whatever the circumstances or degree of the offence, and whatever the subsequent conduct of the offender, without violating his own veracity, dishonoring his own law, and perilling the order and happiness of his whole realm.

This is the purport of the second proposition; and to show how little it rests upon the Scriptures, and how much upon human and imperfect reasoning, I give a passage from the Reply, on the 204th page of the last Magazine. To show the impossibility of God's remitting the penalty, Mr. Dutton says, "If he should remit it by pardon, without making, in some other way, an equivalent or suitable expression of his judgment and feeling with regard to sin, he would recall and contradict the expression which he made by appointing it: he would virtually say that sin is not an infinite evil, that he does not hate it, that he does not greatly desire that his creatures should hate and shun it, that his heart is not strenuously against it." If this be not human logic, with an illogical sequence, I know not what is. What connection is there between the pardon of one who has turned away from his sins, and the declaration, on the part of Him who commanded him to turn away, that he thinks lightly of sin, does not hate it, nor desire any to shun it? And is there no expression of God's judgment against sin, in his often calling it "the abominable thing that he hateth," in his marking it with his fearful displeasure and banishment from his presence, in its deadly sting while it continues, — all the sharper and more terrible if the sin be but outwardly renounced, and hypocritically confessed? Nay, is

there no brand put upon that "evil thing," in comparison with which there is no other evil, whose retribution begins with its birth, and does not end with death, and may not *wholly* cease even with cessation from sin and proclamation of pardon?

For there is another assumption. Pardon is taken to mean, not only the remission of the threatened penalty, in its full extent, but likewise the abolition of all the effects of sin, oblivion of the past, no irrevocable loss of time or power, no remorse or suffering of any kind, but instant restoration to perfect happiness. I do not suppose that all the Orthodox hold this view, nor do I know that Mr. Dutton does; but their mode of reasoning seems to imply it, and, still more, their objections to our reasoning. If they consider what *we* mean by pardon, they will see in it no abrogation of law, nor slighting of its requirements, but rather its vindication in the long-continued consequences of its perverse violation. This is not our confident assertion, but our fear, our sense of the evil of sin. And, whatever else may be thought of this fear, it is no encouragement to sin, or trifling with the law that condemns it.

There is another assumption, or an assertion that we cannot admit as applied to our system, nor find reason for it in the Scriptures. It relates to the meaning of Repentance; and, while it shows how much definitions have to do with differences, it shows also another defect in the common argument. Mr. Dutton, in his reasoning upon the law, and in other places, treats of repentance as a condition of forgiveness, certainly, but as no adequate expression of the hatred of sin on our part, or in view of God's law. Now, it is clear that this depends, first, on our use of the word, repentance; and, next, on the manner in which God and his law speak of it.

To "repent" is to turn from sin; not simply to regret it, confess it, or weep over it, but to turn from it, forsake it, abjure it. Jehovah said, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" — as if to turn was to live, to be saved. "Turn yourselves, and live ye." So Christ's first preaching: "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Such repentance requires and supposes *faith*. It springs from faith as its root; faith in God, in his law of righteousness, his love of goodness, and hatred of sin; faith in Christ, as opening the way, himself the way, of deliverance and life. In the apostles' preaching, repentance is connected

with "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ;" and so we regard it. Christ connects "repentance and remission of sins," in a manner which bears instructively on the whole subject of redemption. A soul thoroughly penitent is a believing soul and true, loyal, holy. Can it ever be wrong or dangerous to forgive *such* a soul? Would a world of such souls "make earth a hell"? — as a venerable divine once said. Such assertion is worse than weakness; and yet it is constant, — constant, I mean, in representing pardon, on repentance, as an absurdity, fatal to government, and a mockery of law. How is this proved?

The proof, or the assertion, makes yet another part of the argument of the Reply. It appeals to "human governments," and enlarges, as usual, on the folly and impossibility of governing a "state," on the principle of pardoning all who profess to be sorry for their offences! Our brethren must allow us to call this reasoning puerile, and entreat them to stop a kind of arguing which renders as little aid to their system as injury to ours. We can scarcely look into a discourse on the atonement, that we do not see this adduced at once as a proof of one theory, and refutation of the other. Dr. Pond, in the very last "Bibliotheca Sacra," not only asserts, as if he knew it, that, but for the atonement, "not a soul of our race had ever been brought to repentance," but illustrates the folly of pardoning the repentant, by supposing A to be very sorry that he has got into debt to B, asking B to forgive the debt, as he heartily repents of it. And then it is asked, "Do his repentings cancel the claims of justice, or release him from his obligations?" This is trifling.

Can it be that any man sees no difference, or not an infinite difference, between human and divine governments? And is this one of the pillars of the governmental theory? If so, it should be exhibited as it is, with no unfairness to a different theory. Mr. Dutton is never intentionally unfair; but the following supposition, with its Italics, comes near it: "How feeble the restraint on crime, when the penalty comes to be, not punishment, but only repentance; when the law virtually becomes this: If thou kill, thou shalt either be punished, *or be obliged to repent!* Can that principle be safely adopted in the immense moral empire of God?" No; and for these reasons among others, — that it is no principle at all; that it is not intelligible, and never existed but in fancy. The law virtually becomes that, and only that, which Jehovah

gave: "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin." Is there inconsistency, weakness, or danger there, in the government of God? There is no analogy between that and human governments, except that they are both governments. All else is essentially different. The Sovereign is infinitely different, the subject is different in his relative character, the object altogether unlike. Omniscience in the one, ignorance in the other: perfect equity there, very imperfect here, with possible corruption: there, the heart appealed to, the conscience to be enlightened, souls to be saved; here, only the outward act or speech to be regulated, property protected, the rights of the citizen, and the prosperity of the state, regarded. What an analogy, on which to build a chief argument! Yet a great deal of the assumed necessity for some other ground of forgiveness, rests upon this idea of its not being *safe* for an omniscient Ruler to forgive the repentant. The safety we are content to leave with God. He will not forgive unless he sees it to be safe. He will not sacrifice the good of the whole for one, nor one for the whole; as neither emergency, or necessity, can occur in a supreme, perfect administration. While it would be madness and ruin for an earthly court to pardon every offender who but expressed his sorrow, and promised amendment, it is an attribute of Divinity, it is a principle of perfection, and a part and promise of the very law of God, to receive the returning prodigal, to welcome the reconciled and submissive subject, to forgive the believing and dutiful child.*

Yes, a part and promise of the very *law of God*. To this we next come, as our final answer to the previous interpretation of the law, and a disposition of the first two propositions.

In the solemn and fearful revelations of Sinai, at the giving of the law by Jehovah, he proclaimed himself "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the

* Even Calvin says, that "threatenings, though they affirm simply" (like the threatening of death in Eden), "contain in them a tacit condition depending on the result." Even Dr. Pond, at the other end of the history, asks and affirms, "Does the setting forth of the penalty of a law, in the form of a threatening, bind the veracity of the Sovereign to inflict it? If it does, then certainly it binds him to inflict it on the *transgressor*." Yet Dr. Pond can find no hope, even for *infant* souls, save through the great expiation.

guilty." Here is a law, if not the law. We know of no reason why it has not a title, equal at least to the declaration in Eden, to be regarded as a fundamental principle of the divine government. If any fasten upon the last clause, "will by no means clear the guilty," it is enough to say, that it is not the guilty who are supposed to be cleared, but the repentant and obedient, in regard to whom God does promise to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin.

Again: by the Prophets, Jehovah has spoken many words, as direct, strong, absolute, in the offer of pardon to the penitent, as could have been found, had it been their very purpose to exhibit the principle for which we contend, in distinction from the opposite principle, to which no reference is made. No other condition is annexed to the offer of forgiveness, no other qualification is named, but repentance and righteousness. In saying this, Mr. Dutton alleges that I "assume the whole question in dispute." I affirm that I state the simple fact. I affirm that with not one of those gracious promises in Isaiah and Ezekiel, with not one of the explicit enunciations of the divine word, — "Repent and return, and ye shall live;" — "Continue in sin, or turn back from righteousness, and ye shall die," — is there a syllable recorded, whispered, implied, or shadowed forth, to show that these promises and laws owe their existence or power to any thing future, — any thing but God's free and pure mercy. Whatever there is *elsewhere*, or whatever it may be thought should be inferred, I insist there is nothing *there* of the kind supposed. That is assumed; and it is an enormous assumption. It claims to know, that God has never pardoned one soul from the beginning out of his own free, unpurchased mercy; never offered forgiveness to the penitent, except by virtue of an event that was to occur thousands of years afterward. It affirms that when He said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" — (mark those words, *for mine own sake*): when he declared to those who should cease to do evil, and learn to do well, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool:" when he earnestly exhorted, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon;" and added

the many repeated assurances of the same kind found in the eighteenth and thirty-third chapters of Ezekiel, — God made these promises only in view of a great expiation to be offered, the sacrifice of another being, or of a portion of himself. This, I repeat, is a prodigious assumption. It is putting a construction upon language, which, like the hypothesis of a "double nature," makes it impossible to know when words mean what they appear to mean, or mean directly the opposite.

We maintain that the law of God, in regard to sin and forgiveness, couples a *promise* with the penalty, annexing to both promise and penalty a condition. It says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Again: "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die." *There* is law, with its penalty and its promise. They who accept one part must accept the other. By one and the same declaration, God has bound himself to punish the impenitent wicked, and to pardon those who turn from their wickedness. To fail of fulfilling either part of the law, is alike impossible to a righteous God; and we have more encouragement, in view of the promise, to ask for pardon on genuine repentance, more reason to ask it confidently, than any others have to protest against it as not safe, or consistent with God's law. It is his law. By his word and truth, by his justice and mercy, it is pledged. We say not that it may be claimed. Only on one doctrine have we ever known a "claim" to be preferred, — the doctrine of full satisfaction already made, and the sinner's debt cancelled. God be thanked, that this form of the doctrine, so preposterous and seemingly impious, did not long survive its birth, and is now unknown! We have no concern with claims or merits, either for works or faith. Forgiveness and salvation can never be of debt, but of pure, free, unmerited grace; and, of that grace, we believe the ministry and mediation of Christ were the *effect*, not the *cause*.

This last is a distinction in which nearly all Christians now agree, if not quite all, in terms at least. It was not so always. The death of Christ, his atoning sacrifice, was once viewed as the source and procurement of God's pardoning mercy. But this view has been long since discarded; and none oppose it more earnestly than Mr. Dutton in this discussion. We believe him

perfectly sincere; but we are unable to reconcile his views of grace with his views of law and justice. If, as is said in the Sermon, and confirmed in the Reply, — stated, too, as the general New-England doctrine, — it is the sacrifice of Christ that alone renders “God just in the pardon of the sins of the repentant;” if it be only by and through the efficacy of Christ’s blood, that God does or can *forgive*, — the order of events seems to be reversed, and the atonement becomes the producing cause, not the product, of pardoning grace: a vital difference.

This leads to the third proposition. We have seen the foundation of the two first, the kind of reasoning by which they are sustained, and other views opposed. If that foundation and reasoning are unsound, the remaining proposition need not detain us. If God, by his nature and law, his perfections and promises, has made both punishment and pardon sure, — the one to the rebellious and impenitent, the other to the contrite and obedient, — then is it *not* true that the penitent, the loyal, and the holy, are saved only through the sacrifice of an innocent being, which alone “has constituted a just ground of divine pardon.” But I have no expectation that the reasons I have given for a different view, will seem valid to minds accustomed to the opposite mode of reasoning, and trained to a different interpretation even of words. On this and other accounts, I am bound to consider the further evidence and arguments of Mr. Dutton. These consist mainly of passages of Scripture, which I can notice only in classes, without adhering to the order of the Reply.

One class consists of those in which the terms “ransom,” “redeemed,” &c., are applied to Christ or his death. If Mr. Dutton understands such terms literally, he should tell us whether he believes, with Irenæus, that the ransom of souls, or price of redemption, was paid to the Captor of souls, Satan, according to the strict and common use of the words. If he takes the words in their figurative sense, as the Scriptures use them in connection with Israel and Egypt, — the sense of “deliverance” only, — he must relinquish the argument.

A second class includes all such expressions as “He bare our sins,” and “carried our sorrows.” And those Matthew explains sufficiently, where he describes Christ’s casting out spirits and healing the sick, by a reference to that very passage of Isaiah which contains the strongest language of the kind; for the

Evangelist writes, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Was there any thing "vicarious" in Christ's manner of *healing*? Did he do more than "take away" sicknesses? So will he take away sins, if we will let him, and will "bear off" our iniquities. Literally, in one sense, our iniquities were laid upon *him*; he felt their awful weight; they wounded and bruised him; they crucified and pierced him; and "his soul was made an offering for sin," both because of sin, and for its removal. In all this, the idea of "substitution" is alike needless and awful; while a fair and frequent use of language brings it within our own view, the same as Matthew's. When full reliance is placed on this large class of passages, and they are so quoted that hearers and readers are confirmed in their prepossessions, it might be well to remember that to the Levitical priests it was said, "God hath given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation;" and to Ezekiel, "Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Israel."

There is another class of texts on which a vicarious sense is put, when no such sense do the same words bear anywhere else. The term "vicarious," Mr. Dutton says, has been given up by many, "because greatly misunderstood by persons of Unitarian culture." There are persons of other culture who may be misled by it. We see it in treatises, and hear it in sermons, frequently. But what most surprises us is that scholars and educated preachers encourage so strange an interpretation of language, by their manner of quoting and applying texts. Mr. Dutton implies that we all allow the meaning of "vicarious," whenever we quote the scriptural language, "If one died *for* all;" "He died *for* all;" "Christ also suffered *for* sins, the just *for* the unjust." For myself, I never dreamed of a vicarious sense there, and should feel that I falsified Scripture, and trifled with men's understandings, if I so used the words. Verily, the prejudice of system and education is seen, if it can warp the simplest forms of speech, and put on that little preposition "*for*" the force of *substitution*. Suppose it to read, "Christ *lived* for us," would any one infer that he lived in our stead? When a parent suffers and sacrifices for a child, or a patriot for his country, is it as a substitute, or only as a friend and helper? In a stronger case, and nearer the point, — when Christ calls himself a shepherd, and says, "The

good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," is any thing more meant than that the shepherd will defend his sheep at all hazards, even to the loss of life if necessary? I know the Greek has different words rendered *for*; but the most common, and that used in the most important passages quoted, means simply "on account of," "in their behalf." "He died for all, that they may live."

All other prominent texts, pertinent or in common use on this subject, may be brought under the general term *sacrificial*. This is a large class, and a most important one. We have no wish to slight it, but no space to do it justice. If our readers would study the whole subject, they will find it fairly presented, as we think, in an article of the "Christian Examiner" for September, 1855, on "The Scripture Doctrine of Sacrifice." We can only give a few general principles, referring, as we pass, to the passages most relied upon for the doctrine expressed in the third proposition.

It is not wonderful that those who stop in the *letter* of Scripture, and hear it always used in one way, find much to favor the common doctrine of atonement. Reverence for the letter has its value; but, if it tend to hide or kill the spirit, it may become irreverence, in its effect at least. As a principle of interpretation, no book will bear it, and the Bible least of all; while, if carried out, it would be fatal to every system, and especially the Protestant. How would Judaism endure it? How Christianity, in relation to Judaism, if all the analogies brought to illustrate the one by the other were literally pressed? It seems late in the day to be cautioning any against confounding figure and fact, letter and spirit; but this we believe, — if Christians had always been true to that distinction, their religion would have more power and prevalence than it has yet gained. We ourselves are so used to the charge of license and irreverence, — even wilful perversion of a volume on which we build our hope for the soul and the world, — that it has ceased to affect us, except to grieve by its wicked calumny. But we care less for ourselves than for the religion. The religion suffers, — not alone from mutual crimination as to the use of the Bible, but from a too common inconsistency and unfaithfulness to the sacred text. Ministers and believers forget their accountableness to God and their Master, when they employ language which does not express

their real belief, retain terms and figures which have long since lost their first import, and use in the most momentous connection a phraseology and reasoning, which not only offend common sense and the moral sense, but impair the respect and hinder the faith of many fair minds on the borders of Christianity, driving them into infidelity, or, at the best, failing to win them away from it. So is it, to a mournful extent, in the domain of Romanism; so, we fear, to a degree that few are aware of, in the province of Protestantism.

Without charging or suspecting any of conscious wrong, we regard the subject of Sacrifice, in its whole history, and the use made of its peculiar terminology in illustrating and enforcing the fundamental truths of revelation, as sadly instructive. Not only the Jewish, but the heathen oblations, are brought to bear upon the very essence of Christian truth and hope. The "Biblical Repository," as late as 1850, furnishes an elaborate article on "The Relation of the Expiatory Sacrifices of the Greeks and Romans to the Sacrifice on Golgotha." Warburton speaks of the heathen sacrifices as a "scenic representation" of the sacrifice of the cross; reminding one of Murdock's "drama-view" at Andover. Mr. Dutton says, that "the sacrifice or sin-offering of Christ was virtually revealed from the beginning;" though neither Moses, nor any priest or prophet, represented any sacrifice as prophetic of the Messiah; and the Orthodox Bloomfield, with others, rejects the supposed reference in the Epistles. From the earliest "offering" on record, in which a late clergyman of Boston (Winslow, in his "Christian Doctrines") finds a promise of the atonement, — asserting that Abel's offering was accepted above Cain's because the former was of *blood*, and the latter only of fruit, — to the command to Abraham to offer up his only son, held by the same writer as typical; through all the Mosaic sacrifices, of which the most prominent were not "sin-offerings," and many were without blood, — even the scapegoat, which is the nearest to a case of substitution, not being slain,* — there is not an instance recorded of vicarious death or punishment; the sins atoned for being chiefly sins of ignorance, inadvertence, or ritual offence, and the restoration only to outward privilege.

* Yet we read in the Reply, that, "under the typical dispensation, there was absolutely no forgiveness of sin without shedding the blood of the victim, which represented Christ."

So, on to the "blood of Christ," now insisted upon as if it were literal blood, whose office was expiatory, though the apostles say it was to "cleanse," not "expiate," and though the "paschal lamb," to which Christ is likened, was not a sin-offering, or even a legal sacrifice, — yea, down to the frequent mention of sacrifice in connection with service, like that of Paul, and with duty, calling upon all to "present their bodies, living sacrifices," and, again, the sacrifice of Christ himself declared to have for its object to "put away sin," to "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God," — through all these, there is seen, in the Trinitarian use, a confusion of letter and spirit, symbol and sense, analogy and reality, until the laws of interpretation seem to be forgotten, and illogical inferences are drawn, repeated, and accepted as parts of the gospel.

To a Jew, illustrating and commending the new faith to Jewish minds, what more natural than to set forth Jesus as a priest, an altar, a lamb, a sacrifice, a propitiatory, or mercy-seat? And yet precisely there lies the strength of much of the Orthodox reasoning; while no notice is taken of the fact, that the same Saviour is also a door, a way, a vine, a rock, a shepherd, a star and a temple, a lion as well as lamb. Then is it right always to quote but half a passage, — "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission," — when the rest shows that the writer (Heb. ix. 21, 22) is speaking, not of sins, but of the "vessels of the ministry," to be "purged with blood" before they were left? Scarcely a text is more used than that, unless it be the one so relied upon (Rom. iii. 25, 26), where those four words, "sins that are past," admitting clearly of more than one construction, are assumed and fixed as the chief support of the bold hypothesis of the reflex action of Christ's death on all who had lived and died before; enabling God, moreover, as by anticipation, to promise pardon to the penitent, as he could not otherwise. Confidently too, for the same end, in the same passage, the connected words, "just and the justifier," are severed, sometimes by an unauthorized "yet" thrown in, and usually by the manner of pronouncing them.* Why interpret those words so differently from similar words, which John uses in his First Epistle, in direct relation to the forgiveness of sins? "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,

* Even Prof. Stuart uses *yet* there, in his commentary.

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Faithful and just ! And this is preceded by a declaration as strong as any of the sacrificial kind, and a key to all if men would use it, — "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." *Cleanseth.* Put system aside, and neither man nor child would take that to be any other than a figurative form and spiritual influence, with man for its object, not God.

It may be said in strict truth, that there is not one verse in the Bible, pertaining to the blood, body, or sacrifice of Christ, that requires larger liberty or latitude of interpretation to bring it within the Unitarian theory, than do the words of our Lord, claimed by the Romanists for their great doctrine, but compelled by Protestants to resolve a literal presence into a spiritual, — "This is my body;" "This is my blood;" "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

Let me adduce, in this connection, a pregnant passage from Josephus, showing how easily a Jew applies to common men the strongest terms, as "ransom" and "propitiation," through their blood and death. He is describing the fortitude of those Maccabees who were tortured by Antiochus. "These men, therefore, having been sanctified of God, have attained this glory; and not this glory only; but it was through them, having become, as it were, *the ransom of a sinful people*, that the enemies of our nation were defeated, the tyrant punished, and the dishonor of our country wiped away; and by the *blood* of these pious men, and the *propitiation of their death*, Divine Providence effected the salvation of oppressed Israel." *

To one other passage we must refer. In finding an explanation and plea for that amazing assertion, that intrinsic impossibility, that "God died," Mr. Dutton adheres to a reading which most scholars have resigned, though one of the strongest, were it genuine, for this and another Orthodox doctrine; (Acts xx. 28), — "The church of *God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood." In a note, we are told that "the correctness of the Greek text is objected to by Unitarians." Can this mean that all are Unitarians who do object to it? Then we have a goodly accession. Grotius, Wetstein, Le Clerc, Griesbach, Kuinoel, Michaelis, Marsh, Middleton, Davidson, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Barnes, Stuart, and many more, believe *Lord*, and not God, to

* Josephus de Maccabeis, sec. 17.

be the true text. Prof. Stuart, in commenting upon it ("Biblical Repository," April, 1838, p. 315), relinquishing with it the famous text of the "three heavenly witnesses," in John's First Epistle, says of this, "The common reading, *blood of God*, is an expression utterly foreign to the Bible. A God whose blood was shed must surely be a 'secondary God,' as the Arians would have it, and not the impassible and eternal God which I believe the Logos to be."

Impassible. Is not that coming to be the faith of the world? And when fully received, will it not shake this theory that we are opposing? God cannot suffer, cannot bleed, *cannot*, in any sense, die. Who was it, then, that bled and died upon the cross? Where is the *infinite* expiation? O brethren! take not from us the tender truthfulness, the affecting reality, of those dying words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Mar not the simplicity and moving agony of the meek sufferer, there or in Gethsemane, by ascribing it to a nature of which we know nothing, and an infliction which we cannot and dare not conceive. Unjustly do you charge us, I hope ignorantly, with declaring that "Christ was simply a martyr." Never in my life did I hear that said. As a "witness to the truth," as living and dying for the world, he *was* a martyr. But none seek to express by it his whole character, or the whole purpose and power of his death. He was such a martyr as never appeared before or since in mortal form. We covet not the faith of those who see in his passion and death less fortitude, less magnanimity, than in the death of "Socrates or Stephen." Not that can be meant; though the words here used, and often used, seemed to say it. Not a high conception of Christ's nature, or of the goodness and justice of God, does that view suggest, which can explain the melting sorrows and submissive suffering of the Redeemer, only by supposing that the Father was then "laying on him the iniquity of us all;" that Christ "was realizing and setting forth, in his sufferings, an expression of the divine feeling against sin equal to that made by the remitted penalty, — the everlasting punishment of transgressors." If Mr. Dutton can believe that, and still disclaim the idea of literal substitution and vicarious suffering, bearing *some* resemblance to the "everlasting punishment of transgressors," he has powers both of faith and discrimination which we have not. By many of the Orthodox clergy,

and by more and more with every age, we rejoice to know that such delineations are disowned; by some, loathed. Of the intelligent laymen of their churches, we have reason to believe that thousands never entertain such conceptions of Christ or God, — conceptions which mingle the elements of trinity and unity, deity and humanity, placability and exacted penalty, sinlessness and suffering as a sinner, the guilty set free because of the agony of the innocent. The enigma reaches its height, when it is said of the whole redemptive work, "We hold it to be *God's* work, as truly and thoroughly as we could if we believed that God exists in but one person."

The Jews asked, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Whence did they derive that sentiment? A different sentiment do Christian creeds contain: "God alone *cannot* forgive of his own free mercy." Christ can, and has. Man can, and must. It is a command, and has a blessing: "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." The penalty is for *not* forgiving: "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." "If thy brother repent, forgive him," — and not once, or seven times, but "seventy times seven." "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." *That* voice issues from the gospel. Is it the same voice that speaks to the sinner in the Sermon of Mr. Dutton? "Look up: there is hope. I have borne thy sins on the cross. My blood is a propitiation for sin, such that God can be just, and the justifier of those who turn to him in repentance and fidelity. Repent, seek after goodness; and, for my sake, God will treat thee as though thou hadst never sinned. Look unto me, and be saved."

But not the sinner only is here addressed. There is a message of sadness for the "holy." As the guilty *can* be forgiven, not through any change in his own character or his relation to God, but only through a change or an event in God's government, the loyal and the holy *cannot* be forgiven, unless that change or event occur. Without this, the best who live must perish for ever, — perish with the same character, as the same loyal and holy beings that they would have been, had the saving efficacy reached them from without. It is not, then, a moral efficacy. It is not to move *them* necessarily, but to move God or his law. It is not necessary that it should be even known by heathen

subjects. Striving to be holy, they may be saved by it, though they know not its presence: sinful or holy, they must perish without it, though they know not its absence. Its nature, therefore, I repeat, is not moral or intelligent, but simply ritual. It works not by faith, but as of necessity. Thus millions are saved or lost by the act of another, over which they have no control, and by which they are not consciously affected. An eternity of bliss or an eternity of woe, for the *same* countless myriads of souls, is made to hang upon that which has in itself no necessary relation to their knowledge, faith, or conduct. Mr. Dutton would not say with Jenkyn, though a popular advocate of this doctrine, that "the salvation of offenders is not the chief end of an atonement, but the glory of God's public character." But he does say that, it seems to us, which makes God's government and man's destiny to depend, not on the eternal principles of mercy and equity, but upon something else. And, alas! even that "something" is uncertain in its extent. *He* believes it to be universal. Many of his brethren — some, I think, in New Haven — have said it could work only "by faith;" restricting it to Christian minds. Still more is it restricted by many, as by most once, to the "elect." For, among its other dark questions, comes up that of a "general" or "limited" atonement; a question still open between Old and New School, as the columns of the "Independent" have just shown, and as a late trial in Ohio, for believing too much, sadly proves. Here is another fact on which I have not dwelt, and will not, — the fact that the Orthodox atonement has taken as many shapes as the Christian centuries; and the contending advocates have said as severe things against each other, as are said even against us. But in all their disputations, beneath all diversities, we grant them the credit, if such it be, of retaining one radical element, — to our view, serious error, — that which binds both justice and mercy, in the Supreme Ruler and Judge, by some power aside. From the Infinite Sovereign, from the all-perfect and benignant Father, is taken away the control of his own law, the power of remitting his own penalty, and exercising his own mercy, for his name's sake, without injury to his attributes, or to the children of his love.

Thanks to the power of God and the spirit of Jesus, this doctrine is losing its hold. Perpetual changes have weakened all the evil, and enlarged the good and true. A better day is dawn-

ing. Strong minds and courageous hearts see the error, and are hasting to remove it. Ministers, professors, scholars and commentators, are springing up, in England and Scotland, France, Germany, Geneva, and America, who preach and teach a different truth. And every great change is an advance. Every essential modification, whatever name it takes, and though our own name be unknown or despised, is a step nearer the precious gospel-faith which we hold, and by which all who consistently hold it, in life and death, are renewed, comforted, sanctified, and saved in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Is it still asked, What is that faith? Having given to Mr. Dutton's view all the space that it seemed right to take, I ought not to occupy much in presenting my own. It shall be as succinct as possible, and should be judged not alone by what it contains; nor should any other believer be judged by it.

Man sinned and fell. There was no help in him, and no hope but in God. God pitied and warned, forbore and blessed; and, the greater the forbearance and blessing, the heavier grew the burden, and darker the doom, of sin. Teachers, helpers, prophets, were sent, and mercies and judgments multiplied; still sin was obdurate, and death despotic. In the fulness of time, the Saviour came. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the SIN of the world!" "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Yea, "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." His suffering was necessary, or it would not have been. His death must crown the life, and *finish* the work. Without death, there could be no completion, no resurrection; and, without resurrection, no assured salvation. "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." The need, the purposes, the influences of all this, are more than man can yet know, or his theologies ever compass. The power of Christ's death, who shall tell? The travail of his soul, the cup that might not pass, the prayer of agony and the prayer of forgiveness, the blood that sealed the covenant of mercy, the cross of ignominy and triumph, the death that abolished death, the rising of the Lord of life, the promise of intercession with the Father, and communion with the believer,

the ascending to his God and our God, — can any one desire or venture to say, that all these are insufficient? Let man be silent; and Christ and the commissioned speak. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." "I lay down my life, that I may take it again." "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you." "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." "God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his *iniquities*." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "Christ died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye *reconciled* to God."

These words express our faith and hope. Our faith is in God, our hope in his mercy and the mediation of his Son. The salvation we crave is not salvation from pain and punishment, but from *sin*. Sin is the enemy we fear, the obstacle to be removed. If there be any other obstacle, it is not in man; and all say it is not in God. Where is it? If God, in Christ, has already removed it, the way is open to the penitent and believing; and, if aught can make us penitent and believing, it is such love as God's, such life and death as Christ's. His death stands forth as no other event does in the world's history, and exerts a power that nothing else has. That power is spiritual, and for *man*. We say not there can be no other power there; but, if there be, it is not for us to define. We ask not what repentance would be, or could do, without Christ's death and its influences. Enough to know, that repentance, if genuine, will be accepted; enough, that it is essential. Repentance and obedience, faith and works, gratitude to God, and love to Jesus, pity for the sinner, with prayer and toil for his redemption, a life's service and sacrifice for truth and

holiness, — these are our duties, — the grace of the Father our reliance, the promise of the Saviour our strength, the fellowship of the Spirit, and of all good men, our power and peace.

Thus believing, may we not work for one end? Our ministry is one, — the ministry of reconciliation. Our work is one, clear as the noonday, — written so plainly, that he who runs may read; thus: "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*"

E. B. H.

DISCUSSION OF THE ATONEMENT, AND ITS INCIDENTS.

BY THE EDITOR.

A QUESTION has been made to arise, in the course of what has been lately published on the subject of the Atonement, lying back of all doctrinal interests, — as much more vital to true religion than any form of belief, as a man's spirit is more sacred than his opinions. This question is, whether there are limits set to earnest Christian investigations, in the practical toleration of what are called liberal Christians, and whether they are willing to deal with sincere differences in real fairness and catholicity. The magnitude of the issues involved in this inquiry moves us to turn aside a moment from the debate itself, to speak a few frank words of criticism on the temper and manners of some of our theological disputants, — without reference, however, to either of the two principal parties to the present discussion, both of whom seem to be blameless in this regard.

I. It is said, that both Mr. Dutton's "Sermon" and our "Remarks" go beyond the facts, in representing New-England Orthodoxy generally as disavowing the doctrine that Christ bore the punishment due to the sinner, and that he died to appease, or render placable, an angry God. A great injustice appears to us

to be thus done to Orthodox believers, — an injustice calculated to retard any advance towards harmony between those that have been reared under Orthodox and Unitarian modes of thought. It is indeed somewhat surprising that intelligent readers of theological writings should have so overlooked the distinctive features of the New-England system. The whole strain of the current Orthodox preaching exhibits the atonement as the sublime and consummate work of God the Father, for his sinning children. It traces the whole, as a wondrous provision of mercy, to *his* inexhaustible and unspeakable love. It finds the origin of the redemption in the compassion of God. It seeks to move the guilty heart, and to melt indifference, by this very appeal, "GOD so loved the world." It denies, emphatically and uniformly, that the atonement was "a fetch," or "a device," or "an escape," introduced to relieve the divine government in an awkward emergency, insisting that it was appointed from the beginning by the infinite Parent, always "placable" and always good, as a final and crowning act of condescension, at once preserving uninjured his own rectitude, truth, justice, (and thus illustrating the only true kindness or mercy to man; for what could be a more terrible cruelty than to weaken any one of these attributes?) and holding out a free forgiveness to the penitent believer. Equally explicit is the entire body of "New-School" theology in teaching that Christ did not take the sinner's penalty in the sinner's stead. Decided as Mr. Dutton's affirmations are on these points, there seems to be a lurking suspicion that he does not truly represent the Orthodox practice. Let us, therefore, cite a few authorities, not going beyond, nor indeed by any means exhausting, the circle of American writers. Dr. Dwight, certainly entitled to be called one of the Orthodox fathers, and occupying no extreme ground on the one side or the other, says ("Theology," vol. i., page 199), "As Christ's own character and conduct are the strongest possible exhibition of mercy, so God, who gave him up to all these sufferings for this end, and to whom he was plainly the dearest object in the universe, has, in this transaction, equally exhibited mercy as his own character." Elsewhere (as in Sermon IX., on the "Benevolence of God," and in vol. ii., pp. 522-28), he expatiates eloquently on the thought that man's salvation, through the mediation of Christ, is "accomplished by God alone;" and in one place he specially alludes to this truth as "the commanding

theme in every desk." He also marks the distinction between "penal sufferings" in the Saviour, and sufferings borne to uphold the honor and dignity of God's law. President Davies ("Sermons," vol. i., page 88) enlarges, in his fervent and effective manner, on the death of Christ, as "a most striking and astonishing display of the love of God." Jonathan Edwards ("Works," vol. iii., page 133, &c.) makes the atonement, as a display of the wisdom and goodness of God, the subject of a long and elaborate discourse. President Edwards, the younger, in his three discourses on the atonement, maintains throughout, both that this way of salvation is the highest proof of divine grace, and also that Christ does not sustain the sinner's punishment, but does what is "equivalent" to such punishment, in attesting and supporting the sanctity of the law in forbidding sin. The current work of Dr. Beman (Presbyterian) is full of the same doctrine. Dr. Nehemiah Adams, in his famous "Letter to Dr. Gannett," makes it his first object to refute the charge that Orthodox Christians regard the death of Christ as literally pacifying God; showing that even Calvin, Watts, and Augustine, however objectionable their *language* may be considered, did not hold that monstrous belief. In the work called "God revealed in Creation and in Christ," by the author of the "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation," both which Orthodox books we must again refer to, as containing views of redemption especially adapted to interest minds of Unitarian culture, occurs this passage: —

"Now, the moral law could not demand the sacrifice of Christ: his perfect obedience fulfilled all its requirements. Sacrifice cannot be required of a guiltless being to save the guilty from penalty. Law does not demand it; but LOVE, as the *recuperative* power of the system, prompts it. Such a self-sacrifice for others is super-legal; and, if this mercy and merit above law can be brought into efficient relation to those below law, the two agencies may not only balance each other, *but they will balance each other*, as a superior moral agency will counterwork a weaker one, *if the one be efficiently united with the other*. Thus, the merit of Christ above law becomes by faith, as we shall see, an efficient moral power, which restores the transgressor to obedience, and compensates as a recuperative energy in the moral system, of which man is a part. . . .

"If law were absolute in itself; if there were no supreme Lawgiver above the law, who could maintain its sanctions while he interposed to avert the penal consequences of transgression, — it would not be possible, in the nature of things, to save any transgressor from the penalties of sin. If any transgressor be saved, therefore, it must be by an interposition of the Lawgiver who maintains the law, while mercy restores the offender. *Power above law is not justice nor mercy; but merit above law is both*. Divine interposition, therefore, to save the lost, would be a substitute of its own merit to maintain the law, while mercy interposed to redeem the sinner. Thus 'God might be just, and the justifier of every one that believeth.'"

Now, we do not at all deny, that, in the rhetorical and dramatic presentation of their views, Orthodox preachers have used, and still do use, phraseology which will not bear to be justified, especially in setting forth the relations of the Father and the Son; nor do we deny that very various opinions respecting the nature of the atoning work have been, and are still, held by men called Orthodox, of different schools, in America and abroad. They are partially shown in Dr. Pond's recent article in the "*Bibliotheca Sacra*." We only submit, that when a statement is made remarkably free from such offences, and exhibiting the Orthodox view on its spiritual rather than its dogmatic side, "liberal Christians" ought not to impute to it errors that it rejects, nor hold its author responsible for them. How else can we ever be assimilated, but by the patient and Christian process of trying to take one another's points of view, and see all the truth that lies infolded in so many mistakes, or imperfect impressions, in each other's creeds? Let the candid reader examine the last Unitarian criticism on the Orthodox doctrine he can find, and see if its whole drift is not completely neutralized to an Orthodox mind by the pervading presumption that Orthodoxy believes Christ, *out of the Father*, as a separate agent, to have done something in his death which relieved the Father of an inability or an embarrassment. What is plainer, then, that when the Orthodox man says, "God could not forgive sin but for the death of Christ," he means that he *could not* just in the same sense that he could not, in forgiving sin, violate his own nature, deny his own character, retract his own law; and so that, in *his* view, all the most unconditional Old-Testament promises of pardon to the repentant presuppose and imply the offices of a Mediator as an indispensable element in a universal design, to be at last fully revealed, unto the praise and wonder and joy of *all* adoring souls, uniting in the heavenly anthem to "the Lamb that hath redeemed us with his most precious blood"?

II. But it is further said, that the Orthodox pulpit is blameworthy for not making emphatic and universal disclaimers of all complicity with the offensive dogma, for using ambiguous language, for not clearing itself of every possibility of misunderstanding. "Has Orthodoxy an exoteric and an esoteric doctrine; one for the pulpit, and another for the study; one to satisfy the intellect of thinking men, and another for popular impression?"

Charity asks that we should deliberate long before dropping insinuations like this. When we consider the force of traditional usages, the uncertainty of all speech as a medium of expression, the "fatal imposture of words," the unbounded latitude of construction, — how the same phrase comes charged with different spiritual significations to the hearts of different worshippers, — we can certainly afford to deliberate. Besides, can Unitarians be forward to pass such judgments? Are the teachings of the Unitarian pulpit altogether explicit, uniform, and literal? Is it known to the members of every congregation, much more to men of another sect, just what their minister believes on the great points of Christian doctrine? Ask the next five laymen you meet. Take the "Annual Register," and, running down the list of ministers, inquire the faith of each one on the essential humanity or divinity, the pre-existence, the intercessory office, the personal presence, of Christ. Now, it is at least conceivable, that, to the Christian world generally, the question whether Christ is human or divine is as vast and fundamental as the question whether he redeemed the world by one or another method of atonement. Touching this very doctrine of the atonement, in all Unitarian definitions which even profess to give a positive view, from the first to the latest, is there any thing that stands out clear, bold, definite, satisfactory? Will any one tell us what the Unitarians *hold*, and what they *teach*, about future punishment? What is the Unitarian doctrine of inspiration? Do all, who administer the Lord's supper to those that take it as a divine ordinance, hold it to be a divine ordinance? Do all who choose texts from the apostles, and quote them to establish their positions, regard apostolical authority as the churches understand them to regard it? or do they keep "one doctrine for the pulpit, and another for the study"? In our opinion, they do neither the one nor the other; but most of them do the best they can as faithful preachers and sincere scholars. Precisely so, Orthodox preachers, who do not believe Christ bore the sinner's penalty, or wrought any change in God, yet represent him as dying in the sinner's stead, and procuring pardon from an offended God. All of us have something to learn. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

III. It has been intimated that our poor attempts to encourage a revision of some of the grounds of difference are not actuated

by a spiritual purpose, but a dogmatic one. One writer says, "We utterly dislike this whole matter of comparison between one sect and another." "Cannot the minds of both denominations recognize the fact that a spirit above them both is sweeping through all the sects, yea, and through humanity itself, as a new dayspring from on high?" and goes on in a tone of such glowing and generous expectation, that our heart leaps with fervent assent to every prophetic syllable, and feels its own deepest conviction and supreme desire to be worthily uttered there. Another says, "I rejoice in every movement towards more catholicity between the various Christian denominations, but have no hope of securing it by any doctrinal tests," &c., &c. We confess ourselves deeply disappointed at a misunderstanding of our intention, so total as this. We do not believe it could have taken place in any mind at all acquainted with our most earnest and constant aims, thoughts, speech. To substitute spiritual affections for theological propositions is just the one precise office which religion now requires more than any other at the hands of Christians. That an inward love to the person of Jesus, a self-forgetful devotion to the blessed and holy Lord, a single consecration to the central Master, Friend, Redeemer, filling all the chambers of his church with his living glory, should take the place of all sectarian strifes, and melt away all barren articles, and absorb the entire church in an undivided and joyful unity, — this must be the daily prayer of all who wait for the consolation of Israel. To get a Christian faith by getting near and living near to Christ, is the simple aphorism which one might willingly lay down his life to see received and realized throughout the Christian world. It was with that sole feeling, as our introductory note signified, that we chose for republication a sermon, by a preacher of unfeigned piety, on "The Relations of the Atonement to *Personal Holiness*." We did not see, and do not yet see, why such a step should be met anywhere with sneers or personalities or captious complaints.

IV. But, to make the matter more puzzling still, the same newspaper from which the last quotation is made, remarks, with more "breadth" than consistency, "A union cannot be hastened by slurring over any real points of difference. The sharpest examination of such distinctions must precede any formula which shall resolve them into a higher unity;" and goes on to intimate, that, for want of that very analysis of scholastic symbols and

intellectual beliefs which the "Broad-Church" brother, in another column, deprecates, our unlucky "efforts at reconciliation are a little too much in a hurry"! These opposite objections may very well be left to balance each other. Both appear to imply that the real offence was not in what we did, but in our doing any thing. The truth is, on the one hand, we shall never duly honor and love Him who died for us, till we rise to some evangelical appreciation of the sacrifice he has made in our behalf; and, on the other, we shall never attain a common confession till we bend before the same cross. Both results are advancing, because both processes are in active operation. No self-seeking plans of precedence, or sectarian schemes or jealousies, can stay them. In every quarter, the Unitarian not less than others, there are stirrings of a holy and most gracious aspiration, — a heavenly thirst for light, not to be satisfied till a divine hope from the breaking shades of Calvary flashes in upon the reconciled soul. In the words of the author of the "Essay on Intuitive Morals," "I do not believe that the experience of any human mind is ever solitary, but that the truths which have proved of vital importance to one must be of value also to many."

V. Yes, the spirit of a controversy is almost always of more consequence than the special matter of the discussion. Has not what has been lately published in this Magazine, on the subject of the atonement, been received, in some "liberal" quarters, with a tone of impatience, and with a disposition to intermix a purely impersonal truth with personal insinuations? Is it not possible that some Unitarians, from having been the excluded, are a little in danger of becoming exclusives? Have they not so long flattered themselves that they had a disproportionate share, if not a monopoly, of liberality, that they "have need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the oracles of God"? May not that happen again which has happened so many times, — that the persecuted learn to practise the persecutor's trick?

Not that we make too grave a business of Unitarian intolerance. The internal and providential laws are all against it. It presents a less imposing figure than the common forms of intolerance, which associate themselves with more zealous convictions, more sharply defined systems of belief, and more compact and disciplined organizations. Still it exists; and its disgrace is only the deeper that it exists in contempt of an antecedent history that

rebukes it, and, in spite of reiterated and unceasing pretensions to the contrary, which put it to shame. Persecution does not consist in the weapons used, nor can it be measured by the prowess it commands. It may live just as malignantly in taunts, slurs, and sarcasms, as in fagots, screws, and axes. Excision itself is not necessary to it. Unitarians would make an awkward hand at excommunicating a heretic. Their temptation does not lie that way. There is not so much to be excommunicated from. Church privileges are not so essential. When the house has no sides, it is not so great a misfortune to be turned out of doors. But other things — like generous treatment, kind constructions, cordial sympathies — are of as much worth to some constitutions, as special occasions for ordinances are to others. Justice and charity are the things wanted, not the forms of them. The bigotry that only blusters in one place, may be as bad as the bigotry that butchers in another. It must be remembered that all the harm of bigotry does not lie in its objective effects. It is a manifold curse within. It both prevents many good things from being done, and perpetrates many kinds of positive mischief. So we take the liberty to say, not because it is pleasant, but because it is true, that there is some pretty bad bigotry among some Unitarians.

When we opened our columns, three months ago, to a fresh consideration of the great truth of the atonement, by republishing a sermon, on the Orthodox side, which we had both heard preached and read through with edification, we did it with a desire to contribute something to a real and legitimate concern in the great central theme of the New Testament, — the bringing of sinners to God by Christ. We did it, in a belief — which is not weakened, but strengthened, every day — that the views on that subject, ordinarily offered from Unitarian pulpits, — let them be stated as they will, — are unsatisfactory, in the extreme, to many who hear them; it being almost always found, that, when Unitarian writers go on from their own statements of the doctrine to quote scriptural passages in support of them, *the scriptural passages seem to mean more and something other than the original statements.* We did it, supposing it not unlikely, that, since the old controversy, a generation of persons has come forward that would be interested in an earnest presentation of the topic. We did it, in a very full and well-founded conviction that Unitarian

congregations are often little informed, if not misinformed, as to the actual sentiments of Orthodox men; and it might thus be well to let one of them speak for himself. We did it, because the sermon we selected was not conceived in a dogmatical vein, but in one that is practical and spiritual. We did it, yet more, because we are wholly convinced, that, in the secret substance of the view there presented, there is a truth and a power, not technical, nor mechanical, nor commercial, nor dogmatical, but spiritual, quickening, encouraging, and comforting, — a truth and power which may not yet have been drawn out in the most perfect language, nor set into the widest relations, nor made impressive to all sincere minds; but, nevertheless, folded up somewhere within that general evangelical statement, — a germ of divine and sanctifying energy, which will yet be a tree for the healing of the nations. And we did it also, as we briefly hinted at the time, because, if this should prove to be true, then the frequent and candid declaration and comparison of honest men's thoughts upon it might lead on, in God's good time, to a more fraternal, Christian unity among the followers of the Lord Jesus.

Of course, we expected that a few voices would complain, and a few sectarians would chafe, at our course. It is a mixed sort of a world; and one must take things as they come, penitent for his own shortcomings, — which are enough to occupy one's anxieties, — and hope for the best. We also expected to meet cordial responses; for we had in our hands so many earnest communications, charged with the purest Christian sincerity and the holiest eagerness for deeper faith, that we knew each of the last three numbers of our Magazine would be like a circular letter, on personal concerns, to many hearts. May it not be imagined, that even those who sympathized the least with what the Sermon taught, should have promptly and cheerfully come forward to say, — if they thought it worth while to say any thing, — "Here is a brother, who has found something, on the holiest and most important of all our relations, which interests him; something that, he thinks, promises help to others. Let us look at it; let us see all we can see in it of good, and kindly show the falsehood that we see; let us rejoice with him, and so be fellow-helpers to the truth"? Would that be a very bad way to deal with the case? Would it not be the way naturally suggested by the professions

of "liberal Christianity" for the last thirty years, and by our highest standard of Christian catholicity?

The question has been asked of this Magazine, whether it is not more ready to censure the faults of Unitarians than of Orthodoxy. To be sure it is; for it was established, and has been mostly maintained, for the purpose of being of service to Unitarians. Should not reproof, if it is only charitable, begin at home? If *not* charitable, it should begin nowhere. First, a man should look after his own faults; then, after the faults of his own family; then, after the faults of those he is connected with in less intimate degrees. What stupidity it is to be hammering away for ever at the sins of people who are out of sight and hearing! There has been enough of that unfruitful business. It only keeps up, in each little circle, a narrow, blind, ugly hatred of neighbors. We know Unitarians, who, under that regimen, have come not only to hate Orthodox people for all that they are, but for a good deal that they are not.

But, if it is implied that we do not give Unitarians credit for their virtues, we should beg to deny the imputation. With much indifference, and not a little prejudice, there is in their body a large allowance of genuine charity and noble-minded generosity. There are ministers and laymen, not a few, with whose devotion in building up the kingdom of heaven on earth we should not dare to compare our own. Good-will among them stands heavy shocks, and does not give out. They *enjoy* differences, and, after warm disputes, part amiably. If some portion of this arises from religious unconcern, another great part springs from a high-principled and well-bred toleration. Indeed, both private conversation and public statements show that there are considerable numbers of them who deplore the prevalent coldness, lack of zeal, and superficial experience, as well as the common tendency to be content with moral proprieties. We have supposed, hitherto, that it was a part of the popular Unitarian creed, that any Christian should be held in fellowship and brotherly esteem who was willing to be regarded on those terms, let him embrace whatever particular doctrine of his own on the subject of human nature, or the nature of Christ, or the atonement. We rather think this is so still. Denominations, now-a-days, strangely overlap each other, and get mixed. To be clear of all sects is not to stand

between any two, nor to court the favor of any. Our own aversion to the Unitarian name, and our desire to be independent of it, arises partly from a belief that that term is not a description of our religious convictions on several important points, and partly from a settled distrust of the general influence of the sectarian measures it covers, rather than from any want of friendship for its men, or of appreciation of its freedom.

What, then, do we mean by saying that the Unitarians have yet to learn a lesson of liberality? We mean this: When some of their prominent writers and speakers meet an expression of opinion which is more Orthodox than the accepted Unitarian standard, or wholly Orthodox if you please, they receive it with a certain sharpness of rebuke, or a certain contemptuous shrug, or a certain petulant irritation, unworthy of large-minded and thoroughly believing men. We may be mistaken; we certainly make no personal imputations: but we have thought we saw signs of this degeneracy of controversial manners in the liberal body. When we meet a sentence in a Unitarian journal (the "Christian Register") like this, "While our Orthodox New-England theologians, and perhaps some Unitarians, or such as stand on the middle wall of partition between Unitarianism and Calvinism, are amusing themselves with that logical cobweb of a governmental theory, as they call it, — a theory which has as little foundation in the Scriptures as in common sense, — it is refreshing to observe," &c., &c., painful thoughts occur to us. "Amusing themselves"! Is it possible, then, we involuntarily ask, that, in any mind venturing to write at all on these tender and holy and soul-subduing themes, the question between any one doctrine of Christ's atonement and another can be, or be supposed to be, a matter of *amusement*? Is the last trace of reverence so wiped out, — the instinct of delicate and serious nature herself so dissipated, — that the very measure of other men's veneration is gone, and their sober interpretations, whether mistaken or true, of the august and affecting realities of Gethsemane and Calvary, are to be scoffingly sneered at as playthings with which they "amuse themselves"? What is the spirit of such a critic's religious meditations? What is the law of his own secret dealings with the mysteries of revelation and the sublimities of faith? What is solemn yet to him? Or is solemnity a word without a meaning any longer? Say nothing now of the thoughtful and gently-bred sensibilities that respect

what is dear and sacred to others' better feelings; say nothing of justice or fairness; say nothing of the truth or error of this belief or that: the very condition of that moral nature in which *any* faith — sincerely held and earnestly defended out of the Bible — in the cross of Him who died for us, can be designated as a toy, is something to be contemplated only with compassion.

If the "governmental theory" is a "logical cobweb," it can undoubtedly be proved to be so; and the columns of the paper where this emphatic declaration appears would probably admit the process. If it has no "foundation in the Scriptures," let the array of Scripture passages, brought in good faith to sustain it, be with equal good faith explained. If it is contrary to "good sense," let the common-sense men who have defended it be answered. But do not let us, in ceasing to respect opponents, vulgarly forget to respect ourselves. The gibe is further invalidated by the fact, that this judge of what is "logical" goes on to quote as "refreshing" a fine passage from Charles Kingsley, which, as he ought to have known, contains no syllable inconsistent with the substance of the "governmental" doctrine.* In the

* When an author's opinions are cited, it is best to cite them as they are. How far the following passage, quoted from one of Kingsley's "Village Sermons," favors the Unitarian mode of exhibiting the subject, our readers can perhaps judge: —

"And then consider that it was all of his own free will; that at any moment, even while he was hanging upon the cross, he might have called to earth and sun, to heaven and to hell, 'Stop! thus far, but no farther!' and they would have obeyed him, and all that cross and agony, and the fierce faces of those furious Jews, would have vanished away like a hideous dream when one awakes: for they lied in their mockery. Any moment, he might have been free, triumphant, again in his eternal bliss; but he would not. He himself kept himself on that cross till his Father's will was fulfilled, and the sacrifice was finished, and we were saved. And then, at last, when there was no more human nobleness, no more agony, left for him to fulfil, no gem in the crown of holiness which he had not won as his own, no drop in the cup of misery which he had not drained as his own; when, at last, he was made perfect through suffering, and his strength had been made perfect in weakness, — then he bowed that bleeding, thorn-crowned head, and said, 'It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' And so he died.

"How can our poor words, our poor deeds, thank him? How mean and paltry our deepest gratitude, our highest loyalty, when compared with Him to whom it is due, — that adorable victim, that perfect sin-offering, who this day offered up himself upon the altar of the cross, in the fire of his own boundless zeal for the kingdom of God, his Father, and of his boundless love for us, his sinful brothers! 'O thou blessed Jesus! Saviour agonizing for us! God Almighty, who did make thyself weak for the love of us! oh, write that love upon our hearts so deeply, that neither pleasure nor sorrow, life nor death, may wipe it away! Thou hast sacrificed thyself for us: oh, give us the hearts to sacrifice ourselves for thee! Thou art the vine: we are the branches. Let thy priceless blood, shed for us on this day, flow like life-

same passage, somebody is disparagingly mentioned as standing on "the middle wall of partition between Unitarianism and Calvinism." Leaving aside all other impressions of this amiable description, its force is absurdly affected by the fact, that, in the sect called Unitarian, everybody stands on a "middle wall of partition" of some sort or other. In fact, the space is completely cut up by middle walls of partition. There are more middle walls of partition than there is house-room. One man stands on a "middle wall" between Unitarianism and Swedenborgianism: indeed, there are more and more of that sort; and, to the credit of the former, there is no quarrel with them. Another stands on the "middle wall" between Unitarianism and Prelacy. Another makes it his distinction to stand on a "middle wall" between Quakerism, Episcopacy, and Methodism, — all three. Another stands on a "middle wall" between Unitarianism and Universalism; and it probably is not very pleasant to him, or honorable to the accuser, if he is accused of "politic evasions" for so doing. Several stand on the "middle wall" between Unitarianism and Pantheism, Hegelianism, Deism, respectively. Two Unitarians, at least, as we suppose, and these among the best known of that name in New England, have accepted a philosophical Trinity, and so may be said to have mounted on this same terrible "middle wall." One brother, as his friends well know, advocates with unction the existence of a personal Devil. Pray, what is on the other side of his "middle wall"? If it is "middle wall" to refuse to bear any particular name, or come into bondage to any particular sect, why, there are quite a number of very respectable men and women on that. It is plain we shall have to do one of two things, — either drop all this prodigiously silly talk about middle walls, when we happen to differ; or else make the tops of walls our common level, resolve ourselves into a sort of general Order of St. Simon Stylites, endeavor to realize the "Broad Church" in the form of a universal "Parietal Board," and make

giving sap through all our hearts and minds, and fill us with thy righteousness, that we may be sacrifices fit for thee. Stir us up to offer to thee, O Lord! our bodies, our souls, our spirits, in all we love and all we learn, in all we plan and all we do; to offer our labors, our pleasures, our sorrows, to thee; to work for thy kingdom through them; to live as those who are not their own, but bought with thy blood, fed with thy body; and enable us now, in thy most holy sacrament, to offer to thee our repentance, our faith, our prayers, our praises, living, reasonable, and spiritual sacrifices, — thine from our birth-hour, thine now, and thine for ever."

the best account we can of our elevated position by being "watchmen on the walls," that "see eye to eye:" —

"Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, this wall away doth go."

Another religious paper — if we followed its own rule of courtesy, we should say the "Register's" "less distinguished contemporary" — begins a not very benignant notice of the Sermon and our Remarks by informing mankind that "the Monthly Religious Magazine has probably gained largely thereby in patronage and popularity." What the circulation of the Magazine has to do with the truth or falsehood of certain views of the redemption is something beyond all our knowledge or imagination. The article goes on, with no pretence of reasoning, and no sympathy with the moral aim of the Sermon, but resolved "not to mince matters," to pronounce the faith of the great majority of the best minds in the church, on the dearest and most characteristic doctrine of the Christian religion, "a mere farce," "an absurd assumption," "utterly unauthorized by the whole language and tenor of Scripture." It may be so: majorities are no final test of truth. Our own impression is, that there is a depth of meaning, strength, and consolation, in the *New-Testament* doctrine of the atonement, not dreamt of in this critic's philosophy, which will yet be brought out, if we will only be fair and diligent and teachable, so that God can thus bless us, into the grateful acceptance of hundreds of hearts now unsatisfied in all denominations.* The same writer concludes with the expression of a happy unbelief that "any common ground of union can be established between the Orthodox and Unitarian portions of the church of Christ, on the basis of such obnoxious statements of the fact and theory of the atonement as those of Mr. Dutton." Such is the answer given to men oppressed with the most affecting and momentous question any soul can ever ask in the present life; that is, how the soul is to be redeemed from sin. Farther down in the same column, we find an extended and ardent plea for a formal union between Unitarian and Universalist societies; we hear pious sighs over the "denominational narrowness and sectarian pride of schismatics, who would prevent a union of Unitarians and Universalists," as one of the great evils "of this vain world;" and we see the most cosy and affectionate advances

towards a "perfect harmony." Of course, this is not "coquetting with" Universalists; this is not making favor with another household, or standing on a middle wall of partition! It is simply good Christian charity.

Let us leave these discouraging signs of a want of genuine liberality of mind in the Unitarian denomination, quite unworthy of its professions, of its opportunities, of its fathers, of the age, of the country, of Christendom, — hoping never again to return to a subject so disagreeable. If the discussion that has been begun shall be continued, we venture to suggest that attention be given especially to the three following points, — on no one of which, so far as we know, has a very full or clear statement been made by Unitarian writers: 1. How are we to account for the extraordinary signs of suffering and solitude and agony of spirit, in the Son of God, at his crucifixion, — the marvellous cries of Gethsemane and Calvary, — unless, in some surpassing and dread experience, he there felt the weight of human iniquity pressing on his soul? How otherwise are we to avoid the conclusion, that here was a martyrdom of less bravery, less joy, less triumph, than many others in the world's history? 2. On the Unitarian theory, what personal relation is sustained, and must be sustained hereafter, by those multitudes of righteous men that have never heard the name of Christ on earth, yet are saved and forgiven, toward Him who declares that "all power is given unto him in heaven and earth," and before whom every ransomed soul, nay, every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, is represented as bowing down to render unto him, even "the Lamb that was slain," blessing and honor and glory and power for ever and ever? 3. If it is true, as, with the last degree of amazement, we have lately heard some of our distinguished divines say they believe it is, that God, in the death of Christ, in some holy and profound sense, does "not suffer" with us and for us, then what is the meaning of those many passages of Scripture which declare that God "*spared not* his own Son;" that he "freely gave him up for us;" that he "so loved the world as to give his dearly-beloved and only-begotten Son"? Is the Christian's God a Being of feelings, emotions, sympathies, making voluntary sufferings and sacrifices for us in his infinite grace, or not? Or, in brief, what do we mean when we pray, "Our Father"?

RELIGION IN COMMON LIFE.

A SERMON BY REV. JOHN CAIRD, M.A.

ROMANS xii. 11: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

[The sermon that has lately excited such good attention, and has been so universally read, throughout the British kingdom, is here presented to our readers. If it was indebted to the accident of being heard by a queen for its celebrity, it is indebted to nobody but its author for its substantial merits. To know that such preaching is done anywhere renews one's confidence in the Christian ministry. It has been publicly stated that Rev. Mr. Caird has received profits on the sale of the pamphlet to the amount of £700, which he has generously and consistently devoted to the founding of an Institution of Mercy. — Ed.]

To combine business with religion; to keep up a spirit of serious piety amidst the stir and distraction of a busy and active life, — this is one of the most difficult parts of a Christian's trial in this world. It is comparatively easy to be religious in the church; to collect our thoughts, and compose our feelings, and enter, with an appearance of propriety and decorum, into the offices of religious worship amidst the quietude of the sabbath, and within the sacred precincts of the house of prayer. But to be religious in the world; to be pious and holy and earnest-minded in the counting-room, the manufactory, the market-place, the field, the farm; to carry out our good and solemn thoughts and feelings into the throng and thoroughfare of daily life, — this is the great difficulty of our Christian calling. No man not lost to all moral influence can help feeling his worldly passions calmed, and some measure of seriousness stealing over his mind, when engaged in the performance of the more awful and sacred rites of religion; but the atmosphere of the domestic circle, the exchange, the street, the city's throng, amidst coarse work and cankering cares and toils, is a very different atmosphere from that of a communion-table. Passing from the one to the other has often seemed as if the sudden transition from a tropical to a polar climate, — from balmy warmth and sunshine to murky mist and freezing cold; and it appears sometimes as difficult to maintain the strength and steadfastness of religious principle and feeling, when we go forth from the church into the world, as it would be to preserve an exotic alive in the open air in winter, or to keep the lamp that burns

steadily within doors from being blown out if you take it abroad unsheltered from the wind.

So great, so all but insuperable, has this difficulty ever appeared to men, that it is but few who set themselves honestly and resolutely to the effort to overcome it. The great majority, by various shifts or expedients, evade the hard task of being good and holy at once in the church and in the world.

In ancient times, for instance, it was, as we all know, the not uncommon expedient among devout persons — men deeply impressed with the thought of an eternal world, and the necessity of preparing for it, but distracted by the effort to attend to the duties of religion amidst the business and temptations of secular life — to fly the world altogether, and, abandoning society and all social claims, to betake themselves to some hermit-solitude, some quiet and cloistered retreat; where, as they fondly deemed, “the world forgetting, by the world forgot,” their work would become worship, and life be uninterruptedly devoted to the cultivation of religion in the soul. In our own day, the more common device, where religion and the world conflict, is not that of the superstitious recluse, but one even much less safe and venial. Keen for this world, yet not willing to lose all hold on the next; eager for the advantages of time, yet not prepared to abandon all religion, and stand by the consequences, — there is a very numerous class who attempt to compromise the matter; to treat religion and the world like two creditors, whose claims cannot both be liquidated, by compounding with each for a share, though in this case a most disproportionate share, of their time and thought. “Every thing in its own place,” is the tacit reflection of such men. “Prayers, sermons, holy reading (they will scarcely venture to add ‘God’) are for Sundays; but week-days are for the sober business, the real, practical affairs, of life. Enough if we give the Sunday to our religious duties: we cannot be always praying, and reading the Bible. Well enough for clergymen, and good persons who have nothing else to do, to attend to religion through the week; but, for us, we have other and more practical matters to mind.” And so the result is, that religion is made altogether a Sunday thing, — a robe too fine for common wear, but taken out solemnly on state occasions, and solemnly put past when the state occasion is over. Like an idler in a crowded thoroughfare, religion is jostled aside in the daily throng of life, as if it had no business there. Like a needful yet

disagreeable medicine, men will be content to take it now and then for their soul's health ; but they cannot, and will not, make it their daily fare, — the substantial and staple nutriment of their life.

Now, you will observe that the idea of religion which is set forth in the text, as elsewhere in Scripture, is quite different from any of these notions. The text speaks as if the most diligent attention to our worldly business were not by any means incompatible with spirituality of mind and serious devotion to the service of God. It seems to imply that religion is not so much a duty as a something that has to do with *all* duties ; not a tax to be paid periodically, and got rid of at other times, but a ceaseless, all-pervading, inexhaustible tribute to Him who is not only the object of religious worship, but the end of our very life and being. It suggests to us the idea that piety is not for Sundays only, but for all days ; that spirituality of mind is not appropriate to one set of actions, and an impertinence and intrusion with reference to others, but, like the act of breathing, like the circulation of the blood, like the silent growth of the stature, a process that may be going on simultaneously with all our actions, — when we are busiest, as when we are idlest ; in the church, in the world ; in solitude, in society ; in our grief and in our gladness ; in our toil and in our rest ; sleeping, waking ; by day, by night ; amidst all the engagements and exigencies of life. For you perceive that in one breath — as duties not only not incompatible, but necessarily and inseparably blended, with each other — the text exhorts us to be at once “not slothful in business,” and “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” I shall now attempt to prove and illustrate the idea thus suggested to us, — the compatibility of religion with the business of common life.

We have, then, Scripture authority for asserting that it is not impossible to live a life of fervent piety amidst the most engrossing pursuits and engagements of the world. We are to make good this conception of life, — that the hardest-wrought man of trade or commerce or handicraft, who spends his days “midst dusky lane or wrangling mart,” may yet be the most holy and spiritually-minded. We need not quit the world, and abandon its busy pursuits, in order to live near to God ; —

“We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbor and our work farewell :
The trivial round, the common task,
May furnish all we ought to ask, —
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”

It is true, indeed, that, if in no other way could we prepare for an eternal world than by retiring from the business and cares of this world, so momentous are the interests involved in religion, that no wise man should hesitate to submit to the sacrifice. Life here is but a span: life hereafter is *for ever*. A lifetime of solitude, hardship, penury, were all too slight a price to pay, if need be, for an eternity of bliss; and the results of our most incessant toil and application to the world's business, could they secure for us the highest prizes of earthly ambition, would be purchased at a tremendous cost, if they stole away from us the only time in which we could prepare to meet our God; if they left us, at last, rich, gay, honored, possessed of every thing the world holds dear, but to face an eternity undone. If, therefore, in no way could you combine business and religion, it would indeed be, not fanaticism, but most sober wisdom and prudence, to let the world's business come to a stand. It would be the duty of the mechanic, the man of business, the statesman, the scholar, men of every secular calling, without a moment's delay, to leave vacant and silent the familiar scenes of their toils; to turn life into a perpetual sabbath; and betake themselves, one and all, to an existence of ceaseless prayer, and unbroken contemplation, and devout care of the soul.

But the very impossibility of such a sacrifice proves that no such sacrifice is demanded. He who rules the world is no arbitrary tyrant, prescribing impracticable labors. In the material world there are no conflicting laws; and no more, we may rest assured, are there established in the moral world any two laws, one or other of which must needs be disobeyed. Now, one thing is certain,—that there is in the moral world a law of labor. Secular work, in all cases a duty, is in most cases a necessity. God might have made us independent of work; he might have nourished us like "the fowls of the air, and the lilies of the field," which "toil not, neither do they spin;" he might have rained down our daily food, like the manna of old, from heaven, or caused nature to yield it in unsolicited profusion to all, and so set us free to a life of devotion. But, forasmuch as he has not done so; forasmuch as he has so constituted us, that without work we cannot eat; that, if men ceased for a single day to labor, the machinery of life would come to a stand, an arrest be laid on science, civilization, social progress, on every thing that is conducive to the welfare of man in the present life,—we may safely

conclude, that religion, which is also good for man, which is indeed the supreme good of man, is not inconsistent with hard work. It must undoubtedly be the design of our gracious God, that all this toil for the supply of our physical necessities, this incessant occupation amid the things that perish, shall be no obstruction, but rather a help, to our spiritual life. The weight of a clock seems a heavy drag on the delicate movements of its machinery; but, so far from arresting or impeding those movements, it is indispensable to their steadiness, balance, accuracy. There must be some analogous action of what seems the clog and drag-weight of worldly work on the finer movements of man's spiritual being. The planets in the heavens have a twofold motion, — in their orbits and on their axes; the one motion not interfering, but carried on simultaneously and in perfect harmony, with the other: so must it be that man's twofold activities, round the heavenly and the earthly centre, disturb not, nor jar with, each other. He who diligently discharges the duties of the earthly, may not less sedulously — nay, at the same moment — fulfil those of the heavenly, sphere; at once "diligent in business," and "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

And that this is so, that this blending of religion with the work of common life is not impossible, you will readily perceive, if you consider for a moment what, according to the right and proper notion of it, religion is. What do we mean by "religion"?

Religion may be viewed in two aspects. It is a *science*, and it is an *art*; in other words, a system of doctrines to be believed, and a system of duties to be done. View it in either light, and the point we are insisting on may, without difficulty, be made good; view it as a *science*, as truth to be understood and believed. If religious truth were, like many kinds of secular truth, hard, intricate, abstruse; demanding for its study, not only the highest order of intellect, but all the resources of education, books, learned leisure, — then indeed, to most men, the blending of religion with the necessary avocations of life would be an impossibility. In that case, it would be sufficient excuse for irreligion to plead, "My lot in life is inevitably one of incessant care and toil; of busy, anxious thought, and wearing work. Inextricably involved, every day and hour as I am, in the world's business, how is it possible for me to devote myself to this high and abstract science?" If religion were thus, like the higher mathematics or metaphysics, a science based on the most recondite and elaborate

reasonings, capable of being mastered only by the acutest minds after years of study and laborious investigation, then might it well be urged by many an unlettered man of toil, "I am no scholar; I have no head to comprehend these hard dogmas and doctrines. Learning and religion are, no doubt, fine things; but they are not for humble and hard-wrought folk like me." In this case, indeed, the gospel would be no gospel at all, no good news of heavenly love and mercy to the whole sin-ruined race of man, but only a gospel for scholars, — a religion, like the ancient philosophies, for a scanty minority clever enough to grasp its principles, and set free from active business to devote themselves to the development and discussion of its doctrines.

But the gospel is no such system of high and abstract truth: the salvation it offers is not the prize of a lofty intellect, but of a lowly heart; the mirror in which its grand truths are reflected is not a mind of calm and philosophic abstraction, but a heart of earnest purity. Its light shines best and fullest, not on a life undisturbed by business, but on a soul unstained by sin. The religion of Christ, whilst it affords scope for the loftiest intellect in the contemplation and development of its glorious truths, is yet, in the exquisite simplicity of its essential facts and principles, patent to the simplest mind. Rude, untutored, toil-worn, you may be; but, if you have wit enough to guide you in the commonest round of daily toil, you have wit enough to learn the way to be saved. The truth as it is in Jesus, whilst, in one view of it, so profound that the highest archangel's intellect may be lost in the contemplation of its mysterious depths, is yet, in another, so simple, that the lisping babe at a mother's knee may learn its meaning.

Again: View religion as an *art*, and in this light too, its compatibility with a busy and active life in the world, it will not be difficult to perceive. For religion as an art differs from secular arts in this respect, that it may be practised simultaneously with other arts, — with all other work and occupation in which we may be engaged. A man cannot be studying architecture and law at the same time. The medical practitioner cannot be engaged with his patients, and at the same time planning houses or building bridges; practising, in other words, both medicine and engineering at one and the same moment. The practice of one secular art excludes for the time the practice of other secular arts. But not so with the art of religion. This is the universal art; the

common, all-embracing profession. It belongs to no one set of functionaries, to no special class of men. Statesman, soldier, lawyer, physician, poet, painter, tradesman, farmer, men of every craft and calling in life, may, while in the actual discharge of the duties of their varied avocations, be yet, at the same moment, discharging the duties of a higher and nobler vocation, — practising the art of a Christian. Secular arts, in most cases, demand, of him who would attain to eminence in any one of them, an almost exclusive devotion of time and thought and toil. The most versatile genius can seldom be master of more than one art; and, for the great majority, the only calling must be that by which they earn their daily bread. Demand of the poor tradesman or peasant, whose every hour is absorbed in the struggle to earn a competency for himself and his family, that he shall be also a thorough proficient in the art of the physician or lawyer or sculptor, and you demand an impossibility. If religion were an art such as these, few indeed could learn it. The two admonitions, "Be diligent in business," and "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," would be reciprocally destructive.

But religion is no such art; for it is the *art of being and of doing good*: to be an adept in it is to become just, truthful, sincere, self-denied, gentle, forbearing, pure in word and thought and deed. And the school for learning this art is, not the closet, but the world; not some hallowed spot where religion is taught, and proficient, when duly trained, are sent forth into the world, but the world itself, — the coarse, profane, common world, — with its cares and temptations, its rivalries and competitions, its hourly, ever-recurring trials of temper and character. This is, therefore, an art which all can practise, and for which every profession and calling, the busiest and most absorbing, afford scope and discipline. When a child is learning to write, it matters not of what words the copy set to him is composed; the thing desired being, that, whatever he writes, he learn to write *well*. When a man is learning to be a Christian, it matters not what his particular work in life may be: the work he does is but the copy-line set to him; the main thing to be considered is that he learn to live well. The form is nothing; the execution is every thing. It is true, indeed, that prayer, holy reading, meditation, the solemnities and services of the church, are necessary to religion, and that these can be practised only apart from the work of secular life; but it is to be remembered that all such holy exercises do not terminate in

themselves. * They are but steps in the ladder to heaven, good only as they help us to climb; they are the irrigation and enriching of the spiritual soil, worse than useless if the crop become not more abundant; they are, in short, but means to an end — good only in so far as they help us to be good and to do good — to glorify God, and do good to man; and that end can perhaps best be attained by him whose life is a busy one, whose avocations bear him daily into contact with his fellows, into the intercourse of society, into the heart of the world. No man can be a thorough proficient in navigation who has never been at sea, though he may learn the theory of it at home. No man can become a soldier by studying books on military tactics in his closet: he must in actual service acquire those habits of coolness, courage, discipline, address, rapid combination, without which the most learned in the theory of strategy or engineering will be but a schoolboy-soldier after all. And, in the same way, a man in solitude and study may become a most learned theologian, or may train himself into the timid, effeminate piety of what is technically called “the religious life;” but never, in the highest and holiest sense, can he become a *religious man*, until he has acquired those habits of daily self-denial, of resistance to temptation, of kindness, gentleness, humility, sympathy, active beneficence, which are to be acquired only in daily contact with mankind. Tell us not, then, that the man of business, the bustling tradesman, the toil-worn laborer, has little or no time to attend to religion. As well tell us that the pilot, amid the winds and storms, has no leisure to attend to navigation; or the general, on the field of battle, to the art of war. Where *will* he attend to it? Religion is not a perpetual moping over good books; religion is not even prayer, praise, holy ordinances: these are necessary to religion; no man can be religious without them. But religion, I repeat, is, mainly and chiefly, the glorifying God amid the duties and trials of the world; the guiding our course amid the adverse winds and currents of temptation by the starlight of duty, and the compass of divine truth; the bearing us manfully, wisely, courageously, for the honor of Christ, our great Leader, in the conflict of life. Away, then, with the notion that ministers and devotees may be religious, but that a religious and holy life is impracticable in the rough and busy world! Nay, rather, believe me, *that* is the proper scene, the peculiar and appropriate field, for religion; the place in which to prove that piety is not a dream of Sundays and

solitary hours; that it can bear the light of day; that it can wear well amid the rough jostlings, the hard struggles, the coarse contacts, of common life, — the place, in one word, to prove how possible it is for a man to be at once “not slothful in business,” and “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

Another consideration, which I shall adduce in support of the assertion that it is not impossible to blend religion with the business of common life, is this, — that religion consists, *not so much in doing spiritual or sacred acts, as in doing secular acts from a sacred or spiritual motive.*

There is a very common tendency in our minds to classify actions according to their outward form, rather than according to the spirit or motive which pervades them. Literature is sometimes arbitrarily divided into “sacred” and “profane” literature, history into “sacred” and “profane” history, in which classification the term “profane” is applied, not to what is bad or unholy, but to every thing that is not technically sacred or religious, — to all literature that does not treat of religious doctrines and duties, and to all history save church-history. And we are very apt to apply the same principle to actions. Thus, in many pious minds, there is a tendency to regard all the actions of common life as so much, by an unfortunate necessity, lost to religion. Prayer, the reading of the Bible and devotional books, public worship, and buying, selling, digging, sowing, bartering, money-making, are separated into two distinct and almost hostile categories. The religious heart and sympathies are thrown entirely into the former; and the latter are barely tolerated as a bondage incident to our fallen state, but almost of necessity tending to turn aside the heart from God.

But what God hath cleansed, why should we call common or unclean? The tendency in question, though founded on right feeling, is surely a mistaken one; for it is to be remembered that moral qualities reside not in actions, but in the agent who performs them, and that it is the spirit or motive from which we do any work that constitutes it base or noble, worldly or spiritual, secular or sacred. The actions of an automaton may be outwardly the same as those of a moral agent; but who attributes to them goodness or badness? A musical instrument may discourse sacred melodies better than the holiest lips can sing them; but who thinks of commending it for its piety? It is the same with actions as with places. Just as no spot or scene on earth is in

itself more or less holy than another, but the presence of a holy heart may hallow — of a base one, desecrate — any place where it dwells ; so with actions. Many actions, materially great and noble, may yet, because of the spirit that prompts and pervades them, be really ignoble and mean ; and, on the other hand, many actions, externally mean and lowly, may, because of the state of his heart who does them, be truly exalted and honorable. It is possible to fill the highest station on earth, and go through the actions pertaining to it in a spirit that degrades all its dignities, and renders all its high and courtly doings essentially sordid and vulgar. And it is no mere sentimentality to say, that there may dwell in a lowly mechanic's or household servant's breast a spirit that dignifies the coarsest toils, and "renders drudgery divine." Herod of old was a slave, though he sat upon a throne ; but who will say that the work of that carpenter's shop at Nazareth was not noble and kingly work indeed ?

And as the mind constitutes high or low, so secular or spiritual. A life spent amidst holy things may be intensely secular ; a life, the most of which is passed in the thick and throng of the world, may be holy and divine. A minister, for instance, preaching, praying, ever speaking holy words and performing sacred acts, may be all the while doing actions no more holy than those of the printer who prints Bibles, or of the bookseller who sells them ; for, in both cases alike, the whole affair may be nothing more than a trade. Nay, the comparison tells worse for the former, for the secular trade is innocent and commendable ; but the trade which traffics and tampers with holy things, is, beneath all its mock solemnity, "earthly, sensual, devilish." So, to adduce one other example, the public worship of God is holy work : no man can be living a holy life who neglects it. But the public worship of God may be — and, with multitudes who frequent our churches, is — degraded into work most worldly, most unholy, most distasteful to the great Object of our homage. He "to whom all hearts be open, all desires known," discerns how many of you have come hither to-day from the earnest desire to hold communion with the Father of spirits, to open your hearts to him, to unburden yourselves in his loving presence of the cares and crosses that have been pressing hard upon you through the past week, and by common prayer and praise, and the hearing of his holy word, to gain fresh incentive and energy for the prosecution of his work in the world ; and how many, on the other

hand, from no better motive, perhaps, than curiosity or old habit, or regard to decency and respectability, or the mere desire to get rid of yourselves, and pass a vacant hour that would hang heavy on your hands. And who can doubt that, where such motives as these prevail, to the piercing, unerring inspection of Him whom outwardly we seem to reverence, not the market-place, the exchange, the counting-room, appears a place more intensely secular; not the most reckless and riotous festivity, a scene of more unhallowed levity than is presented by the house of prayer.

But, on the other hand, carry holy principles with you into the world, and the world will become hallowed by their presence. A Christ-like spirit will Christianize every thing it touches. A meek heart, in which the altar-fire of love to God is burning, will lay hold of the commonest, rudest things in life, and transmute them, like coarse fuel at the touch of fire, into a pure and holy flame. Religion in the soul will make all the work and toil of life — its gains and losses, friendships, rivalries, competitions, its manifold incidents and events — the means of religious advancement. Marble or coarse clay, it matters not much with which of these the artist works, the touch of genius transforms the coarser material into beauty, and lends to the finer a value it never had before. Lofty or lowly, rude or refined, as our earthly work may be, it will become to a holy mind only the material for an infinitely nobler than all the creations of genius, — a pure and godlike life. To spiritualize what is material, to Christianize what is secular, — this is the noble achievement of Christian principle. If you are a sincere Christian, it will be your great desire, by God's grace, to bring every gift, talent, occupation of life, every word you speak, every action you do, under the control of Christian motive. Your conversation may not always — nay, may seldom, save with intimate friends — consist of formally religious words; you may perhaps shrink from the introduction of religious topics in general society: but it demands a less amount of Christian effort occasionally to speak religious words, than to infuse the spirit of religion into all our words; and, if the whole tenor of your common talk be pervaded by a spirit of piety, gentleness, earnestness, sincerity, it will be Christian conversation not the less. If God has endowed you with intellectual gifts, it may be well if you directly devote them to his service in the religious instruction of others; but a man may be a Christian thinker and writer as much, when giving to science or history or biography

or poetry a Christian tone and spirit, as when composing sermons or writing hymns. To promote the cause of Christ directly, by furthering every religious and missionary enterprise at home and abroad, is undoubtedly your duty. But remember that your duty terminates not when you have done all this; for you may promote Christ's cause even still more effectually, when, in your daily demeanor,—in the family, in society, in your business transactions, in all your common intercourse with the world,—you are diffusing the influence of Christian principle around you by the silent eloquence of a holy life. Rise superior, in Christ's strength, to all equivocal practices and advantages in trade; shrink from every approach to meanness or dishonesty; let your eye, fixed on a reward before which earthly wealth grows dim, beam with honour; let the thought of God make you self-restrained, temperate, watchful over speech and conduct; let the abiding sense of Christ's redeeming love to you make you gentle, self-denied, kind and loving to all around you: then indeed will your secular life become spiritualized, whilst, at the same time, your spiritual life will grow more fervent; then not only will your prayers become more devout, but, when the knee bends not, and the lip is silent, the life in its heavenward tone will "pray without ceasing;" then, from amidst the roar and din of earthly toil, the ear of God will hear the sweetest anthems rising; then, finally, will your daily experience prove that it is no high and unattainable elevation of virtue, but a simple and natural thing, to which the text points, when it bids us be both "diligent in business" and "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

As a last illustration of the possibility of blending religion with the business of common life, let me call your attention to what may be described as *the Mind's power of acting on Latent Principles*.

In order to live a religious life in the world, every action must be governed by religious motives. But, in making this assertion, it is not by any means implied that in all the familiar actions of our daily life religion must form a *direct* and *conscious* object of thought. To be always thinking of God and Christ and eternity amidst our worldly work, and, however busy, eager, interested we may be in the special business before us, to have religious ideas, doctrines, beliefs, present to the mind,—this is simply impossible. The mind can no more consciously think of heaven and earth at the same moment, than the body can *be in* heaven

and earth at the same moment. Moreover, there are few kinds of work in the world, that, to be done well, must not be done heartily; many that require, in order to excellence, the whole condensed force and energy of the highest mind.

But though it be true that we cannot, in our worldly work, be always consciously thinking of religion, yet it is also true, that, unconsciously, insensibly, we may be acting under its ever-present control. As there are laws and powers in the natural world, of which, without thinking of them, we are ever availing ourselves, — as I do not think of gravitation when I move my limbs, or of atmospheric laws when, by means of them, I breathe, — so in the routine of daily work, though comparatively seldom do I think of them, I may yet be constantly swayed by the motives, sustained by the principles, living, breathing, acting, in the invisible atmosphere of true religion. There are under-currents in the ocean, which act independently of the movements of the waters on the surface: far down, too, in its hidden depths, there is a region where, even though the storm be raging on the upper waves, perpetual calmness and stillness reign. So there may be an under-current beneath the surface-movements of your life; there may dwell in the secret depths of your being the abiding peace of God, the repose of a holy mind, even though, all the while, the restless stir and commotion of worldly business may mark your outer history.

And, in order to see this, it is to be remembered, that many of the thoughts and motives that most powerfully impel and govern us in the common actions of life are *latent* thoughts and motives. Have you not often experienced that curious law, — a law, perhaps, contrived by God with an express view to this its highest application, — by which a secret thought or feeling may lie brooding in your mind, quite apart from the particular work in which you happen to be employed? Have you never, for instance, while reading aloud, carried along with you in your reading the secret impression of the presence of the listener, — an impression that kept pace with all the mind's activity in the special work of reading; nay, have you not sometimes felt the mind, while prosecuting without interruption the work of reading, yet, at the same time, carrying on some other train of reflection apart altogether from that suggested by the book? Here is obviously a particular "business" in which you were "diligent," yet another and different thought to which the "spirit" turned.

Or think of the work in which I am this moment occupied. Amidst all the mental exertions of the public speaker, underneath the outward workings of his mind, so to speak, there is the latent thought of the presence of his auditory. Perhaps no species of exertion requires greater concentration of thought or undividedness of attention than this; and yet, amidst all the subtle processes of intellect,—the excogitation or recollection of ideas,—the selection, right ordering, and enunciation of words, there never quits his mind for one moment the idea of the presence of the listening throng. Like a secret atmosphere, it surrounds and bathes his spirit as he goes on with the external work. And have not you too, my friends, an Auditor, it may be a “great cloud of witnesses,” but at least one all-glorious Witness and Listener, ever-present, ever-watchful, as the discourse of life proceeds? Why then, in this case too, while the outward business is diligently prosecuted, may there not be on your spirit a latent and constant impression of that awful inspection? What worldly work so absorbing as to leave no room in a believer’s spirit for the hallowing thought of that glorious Presence ever near? Do not say that you do not see God; that the presence of the divine Auditor is not forced upon your senses, as that of the human auditory on the speaker: for the same process goes on in the secret meditations as in the public addresses of the preacher; the same latent reference to those who shall listen to his words dwells in his mind, when in his solitary retirement he thinks and writes, as when he speaks in their immediate presence. And surely if the thought of an earthly auditory — of human minds and hearts that shall respond to his thoughts and words — can intertwine itself with all the activities of a man’s mind, and flash back inspiration on his soul, at least as potent and as penetrating may the thought be of Him, the great Lord of heaven and earth, who not only sees and knows us now, but before whose awful presence, in the last great congregation, we shall stand forth to recount and answer for our every thought and deed.

Or, to take but one other example, have we not all felt that the *thought of anticipated happiness* may blend itself with the work of our busiest hours? The laborer’s evening release from toil; the schoolboy’s coming holiday, or the hard-wrought business-man’s approaching season of relaxation; the expected return of a long-absent and much-loved friend, — is not the thought of these, or similar joyous events, one which often intermingles with, without interrupting,

our common work? When a father goes forth to his "labor till the evening," perhaps often, very often, in the thick of his toils, the thought of home may start up to cheer him. The smile that is to welcome him, as he crosses his lowly threshold, when the work of the day is over; the glad faces and merry voices and sweet caresses of little ones, as they shall gather round him in the quiet evening hours, — the thought of all this may dwell, a latent joy, a hidden motive, deep down in his heart of hearts, may come rushing in a sweet solace at every pause of exertion, and act like a secret oil to smooth the wheels of labor. And so, in the other cases I have named, even when our outward activities are the most strenuous, even when every energy of mind and body is full strung for work, the anticipation of coming happiness may never be absent from our minds. The heart has a secret treasury, where our hopes and joys are often garnered, — too precious to be parted with even for a moment.

And why may not the highest of all hopes and joys possess the same all-pervading influence? Have we, if our religion be real, no anticipation of happiness in the glorious future? Is there no "rest that remaineth for the people of God;" no home and loving heart awaiting us when the toils of our hurried day of life are ended? What is earthly rest or relaxation, what that release from toil after which we so often sigh, but the faint shadow of the saint's everlasting rest; the repose of eternal purity; the calm of a spirit in which not the tension of labor only, but the strain of the moral strife with sin, has ceased, — the rest of the soul in God? What visions of earthly bliss can ever — if our Christian faith be not a form — compare with "the glory soon to be revealed;" what joy of earthly re-union, with the rapture of the hour when the heavens shall yield our absent Lord to our embrace, to be parted from us no more for ever? And if all this be not a dream and a fancy, but most sober truth, what is there to except this joyful hope from that law to which, in all other deep joys, our minds are subject? Why may we not, in this case too, think often, amidst our worldly work, of the home to which we are going, of the true and loving heart that beats for us, and of the sweet and joyous welcome that awaits us there? And even when we make them not, of set purpose, the subject of our thoughts, is there not enough of grandeur in the objects of a believer's hope to pervade his spirit at all times with a calm and reverential joy? Do not think all this strange, fanatical, impos-

sible. If it do seem so, it can only be because your heart is in the earthly hopes, but not in the higher and holier hopes, — because love to Christ is still to you but a name, — because you can give more ardor of thought to the anticipation of a coming holiday than to the hope of heaven and glory everlasting. No, my friends! the strange thing is, not that amidst the world's work we should be able to think of our home, but that we should ever be able to forget it; and the stranger, sadder still, that, while the little day of life is passing, — morning, noontide, evening, — each stage more rapid than the last, while to many the shadows are already fast lengthening, and the declining sun warns them that “the night is at hand, wherein no man can work,” there should be those amongst us whose whole thoughts are absorbed in the business of the world, and to whom the reflection never occurs that soon they must go out into eternity, without a friend, without a home!

Such, then, is the true idea of the Christian life, — a life not of periodic observances, or of occasional fervors, or even of splendid acts of heroism and self-devotion, but of quiet, constant, unobtrusive earnestness, amidst the commonplace work of the world. This is the life to which Christ calls us. Is it yours? Have you entered upon it, or are you now willing to enter upon it? It is not, I admit, an imposing or an easy one. There is nothing in it to dazzle, much in its hardness and plainness to deter the irresolute. The life of a follower of Christ demands not indeed, in our day, the courage of the hero or the martyr, — the fortitude that braves outward dangers and sufferings, and flinches not from persecution and death. But, with the age of persecution, the difficulties of the Christian life have not passed away. In maintaining, in the unambitious routine of humble duties, a spirit of Christian cheerfulness and contentment; in preserving the fervor of piety amidst unexciting cares and wearing anxieties; in the perpetual reference to lofty ends amidst lowly toils, — there may be evinced a faith as strong as that of the man who dies with the song of martyrdom on his lips. It is a great thing to love Christ so dearly as to be “ready to be bound and to *die*” for him; but it is often a thing not less great to be ready to take up our daily cross and to *live* for him.

But, be the difficulties of a Christian life in the world what they may, they need not discourage us. Whatever the work to which our Master calls us, he offers us a strength commensurate with

our needs. No man, who wishes to serve Christ, will ever fail for lack of heavenly aid; and it will be no valid excuse for an ungodly life that it is difficult to keep alive the flame of piety in the world, if Christ be ready to supply the fuel.

To all, then, who really wish to lead such a life, let me suggest that the first thing to be done — that without which all other efforts are worse than vain — is heartily to devote themselves to God through Christ Jesus. Much as has been said of the infusion of religious principle and motive into our worldly work, there is a preliminary advice of greater importance still, — that we *be religious*. Life comes before growth. The soldier must enlist before he can serve. In vain, directions how to keep the fire ever burning on the altar, if first it be not kindled. No religion can be genuine, no goodness can be constant or lasting, that springs not, as its primary source, from faith in Jesus Christ. To know Christ as my Saviour; to come, with all my guilt and weakness, to Him in whom trembling penitence never fails to find a friend; to cast myself at His feet in whom all that is sublime in divine holiness is softened, though not obscured, by all that is beautiful in human tenderness; and, believing in that love stronger than death, which for me, and such as me, drained the cup of untold sorrows, and bore without a murmur the bitter curse of sin; to trust my soul for time and eternity into His hands, — this is the beginning of true religion. And it is the reverential love with which the believer must ever look to Him to whom he owes so much, that constitutes the mainspring of the religion of daily life. Selfishness may prompt to a formal religion, natural susceptibility may give rise to a fitful one; but for a life of constant, fervent piety, amidst the world's cares and toils, no motive is sufficient save one, — self-devoted love to Christ.

But again, if you would lead a Christian life in the world, let me remind you that that life must be *continued* as well as begun with Christ. You must learn to look to him, not merely as your Saviour from guilt, but as the Friend of your secret life, the chosen Companion of your solitary hours, the Depositary of all the deeper thoughts and feelings of your soul. You cannot live *for* him in the world unless you live much *with* him, apart from the world. In spiritual as in secular things, the deepest and strongest characters need much solitude to form them. Even earthly greatness, much more moral and spiritual greatness, is never attained but as the result of much that is concealed from the world, — of

many a lonely and meditative hour. Thoughtfulness, self-knowledge, self-control, a chastened wisdom and piety, are the fruit of habitual meditation and prayer. In these exercises Heaven is brought near, and our exaggerated estimate of earthly things corrected; by these, our spiritual energies, shattered and worn by the friction of worldly work, are repaired. In the recurring seasons of devotion, the cares and anxieties of worldly business cease to vex us; exhausted with its toils, we have, in daily communion with God, "meat to eat which the world knoweth not of;" and even when its calamities and losses fall upon us, and our portion of worldly good may be withdrawn, we may be able to show, like those holy ones of old at the heathen court, by the fair serene countenance of the spirit, that we have something better than the world's pulse to feed upon.

But, further, in availing yourself of this divine resource amidst the daily exigencies of life, why should you wait always for the periodic season and the formal attitude of prayer? The heavens are not open to the believer's call only at intervals. The grace of God's Holy Spirit falls not like the fertilizing shower, only now and then; or like the dew on the earth's face, only at morning and night. At all times, on the uplifted face of the believer's spirit, the gracious element is ready to descend. Pray always; pray without ceasing. When difficulties arise, delay not to seek and obtain at once the succor you need. Swifter than by the subtle electric agent is thought borne from earth to heaven. The Great Spirit on high is in constant sympathy with the believing spirit beneath; and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the thrill of aspiration flashes from the heart of man to God. Whenever any thing vexes you; whenever, from the rude and selfish ways of men, any trials of temper cross your path; when your spirits are ruffled, or your Christian forbearance put to the test, — be this your instant resource! Haste away, if only for a moment, to the serene and peace-breathing presence of Jesus, and you will not fail to return with a spirit soothed and calmed. Or when the impure and low-minded surround you; when, in the path of duty, the high tone of your Christian purity is apt to suffer from baser contacts, — oh, what relief to lift the heart to Christ; to rise on the wings of faith; even for one instant to breathe the air of that region where the Infinite Purity dwells, and then return with a mind steeled against temptation, ready to recoil, with the instinctive abhorrence of a spirit that has been beside the throne,

from all that is impure and vile! Say not, then, with such aid at your command, that religion cannot be brought down to common life!

In conclusion, let me once more urge upon you the great lesson on which we have been insisting. Carry religious principle into every-day life. Principle elevates whatever it touches. Facts lose all their littleness to the mind which brings principle and law to bear upon them. The chemist's or geologist's soiled hands are no sign of base work: the coarsest operations of the laboratory, the breaking of stones with a hammer, cease to be mechanical when intellectual thought and principle govern the mind and guide the hands. And religious principle is the noblest of all. Bring it to bear on common actions and coarse cares, and infinitely nobler even than the philosophic or scientific becomes the Christian life. Live for Christ in common things, and all your work will become priestly work. As, in the temple of old, it was holy work to hew wood or mix oil, because it was done for the altar-sacrifice or the sacred lamps; so all your coarse and common work will receive a consecration when done, for God's glory, by one who is a true priest to his temple.

Carry religion into common life, and your life will be rendered useful as well as noble. There are many men who listen incredulously to the high-toned exhortations of the pulpit: the religious life there depicted is much too seraphic, they think, for this plain and prosaic world of ours. Show these men that the picture is not a fancy one; make it a reality; bring religion down from the clouds; apply to it the infallible test of experiment; and, by suffusing your daily actions with holy principles, prove that love to God, superiority to worldly pleasure, spirituality, holiness, heavenly-mindedness, are something more than the stock ideas of sermons.

Carry religious principle into common life, and common life will lose its transitoriness. "The world passeth away"! "The things that are seen are temporal." Soon business, with all its cares and anxieties, — the whole "unprofitable stir and fever of the world," — will be to us a thing of the past. But religion does something better than sigh and muse over the perishableness of earthly things: it finds in them the seed of immortality. No work done for Christ perishes; no action that helps to mould the deathless mind of a saint of God is ever lost. Live for Christ in the world, and you carry out with you into eternity all of the

results of the world's business that are worth the keeping. The river of life sweeps on; but the gold grains it held in solution are left behind, deposited in the holy heart. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Every other result of our "diligence in business" will soon be gone. You cannot invent any mode of exchange between the visible and invisible worlds, so that the balance at your credit in the one can be transferred, when you migrate from it, to your account in the other. Worldly sharpness, acuteness, versatility, are not the qualities in request in the world to come. The capacious intellect, stored with knowledge, and disciplined into admirable perspicacity, tact, worldly wisdom, by a lifetime devoted to politics or business, is not, by such attainments, fitted to take a higher place among the sons of immortality. The honor, fame, respect, obsequious homage, that attend worldly greatness up to the grave's brink, will not follow it one step beyond. These advantages are not to be despised; but if these be all that, by the toil of our hand or the sweat of our brow, we have gained, the hour is fast coming when we shall discover that we have labored in vain, and spent our strength for nought. But, while these pass, there are other things that remain. The world's gains and losses may soon cease to affect us, but not the gratitude or the patience, the kindness or the resignation, they drew forth from our hearts. The world's scenes of business may fade on our sight, the noise of its restless pursuits may fall no more upon our ear, when we pass to meet our God; but not one unselfish thought, not one kind and gentle word, not one act of self-sacrificing love, done for Jesus' sake, in the midst of our common work, but will have left an indelible impress on the soul which will go out with it to its eternal destiny. So live, then, that this may be the result of your labors; so live that your work, whether in the church or in the world, may become a discipline for that glorious state of being in which the church and the world shall become one; where work shall be worship, and labor shall be rest; where the worker shall never quit the temple, nor the worshipper the place of work; because "there is no temple therein; but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof."

THE BRIDGE.

THERE is a bridge of beauty
 O'er turbid waters thrown ;
 Its model piers and rafters
 Are neither wood nor stone.

In silence deep and solemn
 It grew, as grows the oak ;
 Built, like the sacred Temple,
 Without the hammer's stroke.

By skill of cunning craftsmen,
 Its arches firm were made ;
 And in harmonious numbers
 Its mystic beams were laid.

It beareth quaint devices
 Of wild dreams coming true ;
 And on it strange old legends
 Are chronicled anew.

When wind and storm are loudest,
 And wildly rolls the sea,
 Serene o'er all it floateth,
 O'er all it beareth me.

I cross this bridge with burdens
 In darkest hours of night ;
 And there, among the shadows,
 I find a steady light.

It shineth calm and constant,
 And cheers me all the way ;
 My burden lighter groweth,
 And night is fair as day.

When I am tired of hearing
 The world's discordant notes,
 I cross this bridge to rest me,
 And peaceful music floats —

From silver bells above me,
Till strife and care depart;
And, sounding on long after,
Their chimes ring in my heart.

High over rank and riches,
From gilded thralldom free,
This bridge for ever riseth
In primal majesty.

On human hearts it resteth,
This magic bridge I sing;
And angels, sent from Heaven,
Their errands o'er it bring.

Love built this bridge of refuge
Across Life's stormy sea,
And made its arches firmer
Than solid masonry.

With sweet and sacred memories
Of hours too quickly flown,
Like green perennial mosses,
Its piers are overgrown.

And in among its rafters
A graceful hand hath wrought,
And wreathed each bar and cross-beam
With flowers of tender thought.

As years, in mute procession,
Pass by with stately tread,
This bridge new moss shall gather,
New flowers their fragrance shed.

SALEM, Feb., 1856.

S. F. C.

JOWETT ON THE NATURE OF CHRIST.

THE dissertation of this earnest and interesting writer on the Atonement — though inferior to some of the papers which accompany it, and, in fact, suggesting only the familiar criticisms — contains the following just paragraph: —

"Definite statements, respecting the relation of Christ either to God or man, are but human figures transferred to a subject which is beyond speech and thought. There may seem to be a kind of feebleness in falling back on mystery, when the traditional language of ages is so clear and explicit; but mystery is the nearest approach that we can make to the truth: only by indefiniteness can we avoid putting words in the place of things. We know nothing of the objective act on God's part, by which he reconciled the world to himself, the very description of it as an act being only a figure of speech; and we seem to know that we never can know any thing. While clinging to the ground of fact, we feel also that there is more in that fact than we see or understand. This is not a ground of fear, but of hope; not of uncertainty, but of peace. There is hope and peace in what we see, yet more as we believe in possibilities of which we are ignorant. We can live and die, in the language of St. Paul and St. John, without fear for ourselves, or dishonor to the name of Christ. We need not change a word that they use, or add on a single consequence to their statement of the truth."

TO EMMA —.

UNASKED, thy timid kisses steal
Softly upon my brow and lips;
And then thy bright, sweet face is laid
Upon my neck, in brief eclipse.

The sleep, that weighed my eyelids down,
Falls sweeter, as thy gentle touch
Upon my forehead soothes away
The restless pain that wearies much.

Dear little girl, whose earnest voice,
Warm with "I love you," is so sweet
Unto the tired sufferer's ear,
Heaven keep thy little noiseless feet —

Ever within "the pleasant ways,"
Ever beneath his tenderest care,
Until his love shall call thee hence
Into the land for ever fair!

A. E. F.

EDITOR'S COLLECTANEA.

PUBLICATIONS.

Macaulay's History of England. Phillips, Sampson, and Co.
 — All the way from Maine to Minnesota, men and women who read any thing have already followed the fascinating master of annals through another stage of his great story. This begins with the public festivities at the accession of William and Mary in 1689; and ends with the still more general and profound rejoicings at the proclamation of peace (secured, in spite of the machinations of James, by the Treaty of Ryswick), the universal thanksgivings, the opening of St. Paul's Cathedral, the illumination of London, the renewal of English liberty, independence, commerce, and all prosperity, in 1697. But the record is by no means one of festal occurrences: between these happy extremes there is abundance of tragedy. The storms of those days were dark and bitter enough to make the return of sunshine a time of blessed relief and rest for every heart in the realm. Of course, the account of the period just indicated includes the stirring events in Ireland and Scotland; the royal visits to the Hague; the plots of the Jacobites; important developments in the religious and civil life of the nation; the exploits of Marlborough; the wars of the continent; besides those frequent and brilliant portraitures of eminent characters which give the historian's pages all the attractions of romance and the charms of biography, uniting these with the ingenuities of ethical analysis and the dignity of judicial opinions. The proportion borne by the matter to the time awakens in many persons an anxiety lest Mr. Macaulay should leave his design unfinished, and creates a special solicitude respecting his impaired health; but, so long as nothing is superfluous, we do not perceive what the public would gain by making the survey more cursory, or the limits wider. In either case, the world will have from the indefatigable writer the same amount of intellectual toil and fruit; and he is certainly right in satisfying his own idea of completeness as he goes on, even if he never finishes the seventeenth century. This fair and convenient edition is, fortunately for the people, sold at the trifling price of forty cents a volume.

The Confidential Correspondence of Napoleon Bonaparte with his Brother Joseph, sometime King of Spain. D. Appleton and Co. — In these two volumes of translations, what is worth reading at all is very well worth reading; but there is a great deal that does not fall under that description. In fact, the letters throw little new light on the character of the man, and afford slight assistance to those who would prove him either a democrat or a saint. Judged by the world's current standards of greatness, Napoleon was admirable; judged by Christianity, he was not. To set him up for a disinterested reformer is just about as vain as to deny the vast power of his brain. The translator says, in an infelicitous phrase, "I have been beset by a constant temptation to improve on my author."

The Angel in the House: Betrothal. Ticknor and Fields. — Let nobody begin this perfect poem who has any special duty before him for the next two hours; otherwise he will be likely to be tempted into the sin of breaking his engagement. To our notion, Old England has not sung, nor New England repeated, a more genuine song than this for many a month or year. It takes us clean out of the artificial tricks, the tawdry mannerisms, the ambitious inflations, the strainings for effect, with which the real genius of so many modern poets damages its own creations, and pours out a fresh, vigorous, healthy stream for us from the fountain-heads of Nature. Familiar, colloquial episodes relieve the statelier march of the verse, with a fine artistic sense of fitness; and epigrams of wholesome wisdom are scattered among the silvery cadences, like the counsels of thoughtful old age interrupting, without rebuking, the carols of youth. It is pastoral enough for Arcadia, and, without being directly religious, Christian enough for any Christian house. It glorifies wedlock and the home; and, if it sometimes *seems* to render exaggerated tributes to woman, it is only because these tributes are less apt to be paid to the wife and the mother than the mistress or the sibyl.

Recent Speeches and Addresses by Charles Sumner. Ticknor and Fields. — This valuable addition to the published works of a man who will deserve to be described as the scholar, orator, and statesman of American liberty in the middle of the nineteenth century, — if his future course shall be what the past promises, — begins with Mr. Sumner's letter of acceptance as senator of the United States, from Massachusetts, in 1851, and contains twenty-four addresses and speeches delivered in the Senate and elsewhere since that time. These are all so well known to the country at

large, that it is only necessary to mention that they are now collected and bound in a becoming form. They will hereafter be prized as much for their vital sympathy and connection with the actual and grand interests of the nation in these times, as for their extensive learning, their fervid eloquence, and their faithful rendering of what is due both to Cæsar and to God, in the discussion of the political questions of the day.

Selections from the Writings of Walter Savage Landor. Edited by GEORGE STILLMAN HILLARD. Ticknor and Fields. — To many readers of common books, this volume will be a first introduction to one of the most remarkable of England's contemporaneous intellectual men. It is therefore a generous and grateful office extended by one thoughtful and scholarly mind to another. By their distinct and somewhat aphoristic character, Landor's compositions are peculiarly suited to this difficult and hazardous process of presentation by specimens. They join a classical spirit with uncommon original force. Mr. Hillard says, "If, through the vestibule this little book offers, I can persuade the public to pass into the stately structure of wisdom and beauty which Landor has reared, my purpose will have been accomplished. He deserves to be read by the American people, aside from his literary merits, for his ardent love of liberty, and his sympathy with all who do not possess its blessings."

Annual of Scientific Discovery for 1856. Edited by DAVID A. WELLS. Gould and Lincoln. — If we imagine such a series of publications as this to have been issued a hundred years ago, we shall at once have a measure of its value, and an illustration of the difference that a hundred years have made in the condition of the practical arts and of scientific research. The careful perusal of this volume by any mechanic would probably do him quite as much good as attending any course of miscellaneous lyceum lectures.

The Attaché in Madrid; or, Sketches of the Court of Isabella II. Translated from the German. D. Appleton and Co. — This lively, gossiping writer shows us the fashionable and courtly society of Spain and its capital; and, as there is nothing very refining or elevating in the society, so there is nothing very refining or elevating in the picture. It serves the end of amusement, and conveys only that indefinite and ambiguous sort of knowledge which is called "knowledge of the world."

Rachel Gray: a Tale founded on Fact. By JULIA KAVANAGH. D. Appleton and Co. — "Rachel Gray" would be not only a wise

choice for those readers that must have a novel of some sort, but it well repays the time it takes on its own account. The incidents are natural and affecting; the style is simple and clear; the sentiments are pure and Christian. The whole is so constructed and directed as to correct the false ideas that most fictions inculcate; teaching esteem and contentment for common life, cheerful righteousness in all actions, and religious faith in every kind and degree of trouble.

Wolfsden. By J. B. Phillips, Sampson, and Co. — It is too much spun out. There are too many hackneyed descriptions. There is not a sufficiently distinct moral purpose. The author should try again, leave out what is commonplace, concentrate the rest, and ask himself what precise object he has which justifies the cost of time, paper, types, ink, and binding.

Edith Hale: a Village Story. By THRACE TALMON. Phillips, Sampson, and Co. — It may seem unkind; but what was said of the book last noticed must, with some abatement, be applied to this: that is the best service we can render to the unknown author. There are good, and even religious, feelings expressed; but the influence, on the whole, is not very satisfactory.

Connecticut Common-School Journal. — We have received Vol. IX. of this well-conducted educational periodical. It is evidently in the hands of energetic and experienced men, making a study and an honor of their business. There is a series of able articles, of much interest in these times, on the use of the Bible in schools.

Life of Schamyl, and Narrative of the Circassian War. By J. MILTON MACKIE. J. P. Jewett and Co. — The romantic and almost fabulous accounts which have reached us, during the Eastern war, of the exploits, courage, and address of this bold warrior, will readily prepare a market for this account of his life and fortunes. The narrative is full of spirit, and well repays the cost of perusal, introducing us to a part of the world and to customs and scenes with which few Americans are familiar. Copious explanations are given of the Circassian people and their habits, along with the strange biography of the hero.

The Bush-Boys. By Captain MAYNE REID. Ticknor and Fields. — A farmer and his family of sons, with one daughter, are represented as passing through all the adventurous and exciting experiences of a new settlement on the frontiers of Southern Africa. Besides the interest of the story, much information is incidentally given about the strange animals, productions, and scenery of that region. The boys say Captain Reid, in all his

books for them, knows what they like. He corrects a common impression, that the hyena is a ferocious creature. The beast is by no means lovely; but in the braver attributes of savageness he appears to have very little share. He represents those controversialists that are more ready to prey on a formidable opponent's reputation after he is dead than to attack him alive.

Tragic Scenes in the History of Maryland and the Old French War. By JOSEPH BANVARD, A.M. Gould and Lincoln. — Mr. Banvard, in this new number of his useful series, selects such incidents connected with the colonizing and early fortunes of Maryland, with some collateral matters, as will be most likely to engage the attention of young readers; but they are well connected together, and serve the purpose of illustrating many things respecting the laws and customs of the first days of our national life, which are only briefly touched upon in the common books of history.

Report of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America. — At the request of the Society, and at great pains, Rev. Dr. LOTHROP, the Secretary, has drawn up what is really a succinct and complete chronicle of this old and beneficent charity from the beginning to this day, with ample statements of the present condition of its several missions. One hundred and sixty-four persons have been members of it, of whom forty-seven survive. The charter limits the number to fifty at any one time.

The *Independent Highway* is the title of a weekly periodical for the home-circle, edited, with spirit and taste, by Mrs. E. D. LIVERMORE, at Cincinnati. Let her friends send her the price of subscription, which is only one dollar a year.

An Affectionate Remonstrance against a Frequent Abuse of the Pulpit and the Religious Press. — In this pamphlet, Rev. Dr. WILLARD, of Deerfield, — venerated and beloved wherever he is known, — has given his impressions of a painful local and ecclesiastical difference among his neighbors and former parishioners, together with some earnest protestations against bigotry and misrepresentation. The pamphlet may be found at the bookstore of Crosby, Nichols, and Co.

MONTHLY RECORD.

With the usual suspicions of tyrannical power, or for the purpose of gratifying personal hate, the Papal authorities in Rome have recently made many seizures, and the prisons of the Inquisition are full. The pretence is a knowledge of some widespread conspiracy to subvert the pope.

The city of Baltimore has a population of thirty thousand colored people. Probably nowhere in the United States is the condition of the African race so elevated. Schools and churches, and in many cases much wealth and cultivation, attest this. A new step has there lately been taken to promote the progress of colored people. A distinguished philanthropist of that city, William Crane, has erected a large edifice, at a cost of twenty thousand dollars, containing a place for worship, school-rooms, halls for lectures; while the first floor is used for stores. A pastor and teachers are engaged, all for the exclusive benefit of the colored race.

Chevalier Bunsen, now professor at Heidelberg, promises a new work soon to be given to the public. The title is, "The Belief of Humanity in a Moral Order of the World; or, the Development of the Knowledge of God in the World's History." Such a vast subject properly falls to this author, who is regarded as among the foremost scholars of the age.

A measure of great importance to the Hindoo population has recently been brought before the Legislative Council of Calcutta. Among the Hindoos, girls are usually betrothed before they are eight years old. Their selected partners are persons whom they have never seen, and never will see till the time of marriage. By the modern interpretation of certain regulations, betrothal is held to be equivalent to marriage; and hence there are thousands of young girls who, through the death of their partners, are regarded as widows. These unhappy girls are doomed not only to celibacy, but to slavery. They

may wear no ornaments, are compelled to pass much of their time in fasting, and on all occasions must take the lowest place in the household. This is not the worst; nor can the worst be told, beyond alluding to the universal demoralization of this class. To rescue them from their degraded condition is the object of the law proposed. As the British laws have recognized the validity of these Hindoo regulations, and have made the child of a remarried widow illegitimate, the new law declares a second betrothal and marriage to be legal. If enacted, it is thought it will save thousands from a servile and sinful lot.

By the union of English and American naval forces in the Chinese seas, five hundred pirates were killed, wounded, or drowned, on the 20th of August last, after an hour of hard fighting. This destruction of a strong piratical fleet is regarded as of incalculable importance to commerce in those seas.

An unprecedented fact lately occurred in Cork, Ireland. On the due opening of the Cork Sessions, it was found that there was not a single criminal case to come up for trial. No fact could speak louder in praise of the improved condition of that part of Ireland.

In England, Macaulay's History is read by everybody who can buy it; and it is read to those who cannot afford the purchase. The way it is done is this: a public reading is commenced in a news-room. In one instance, at least, this was done in a public reading-room, in Leicester Square, London, as we learn from the London "Leader," which adds, that "the room was well attended, and the reader was listened to with deep interest." We agree with that paper, that "the idea is a capital one;" and we think it might well be adopted in many towns and villages among us not able to support a course of lectures. Indeed, in many cases it would be preferable to lectures.